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M-CELL DEBATE —RAMESH PONNURU

PRYCE-JONES: THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR, CASE CLOSED

NATIONAL REVIEW

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Only an amendment to the Constitution can end the abuse of the judicial process and protect both marriage and democracy in America.

Robert P. George
The Editors

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Rosemary Turner, District Manager, Northern Plains—North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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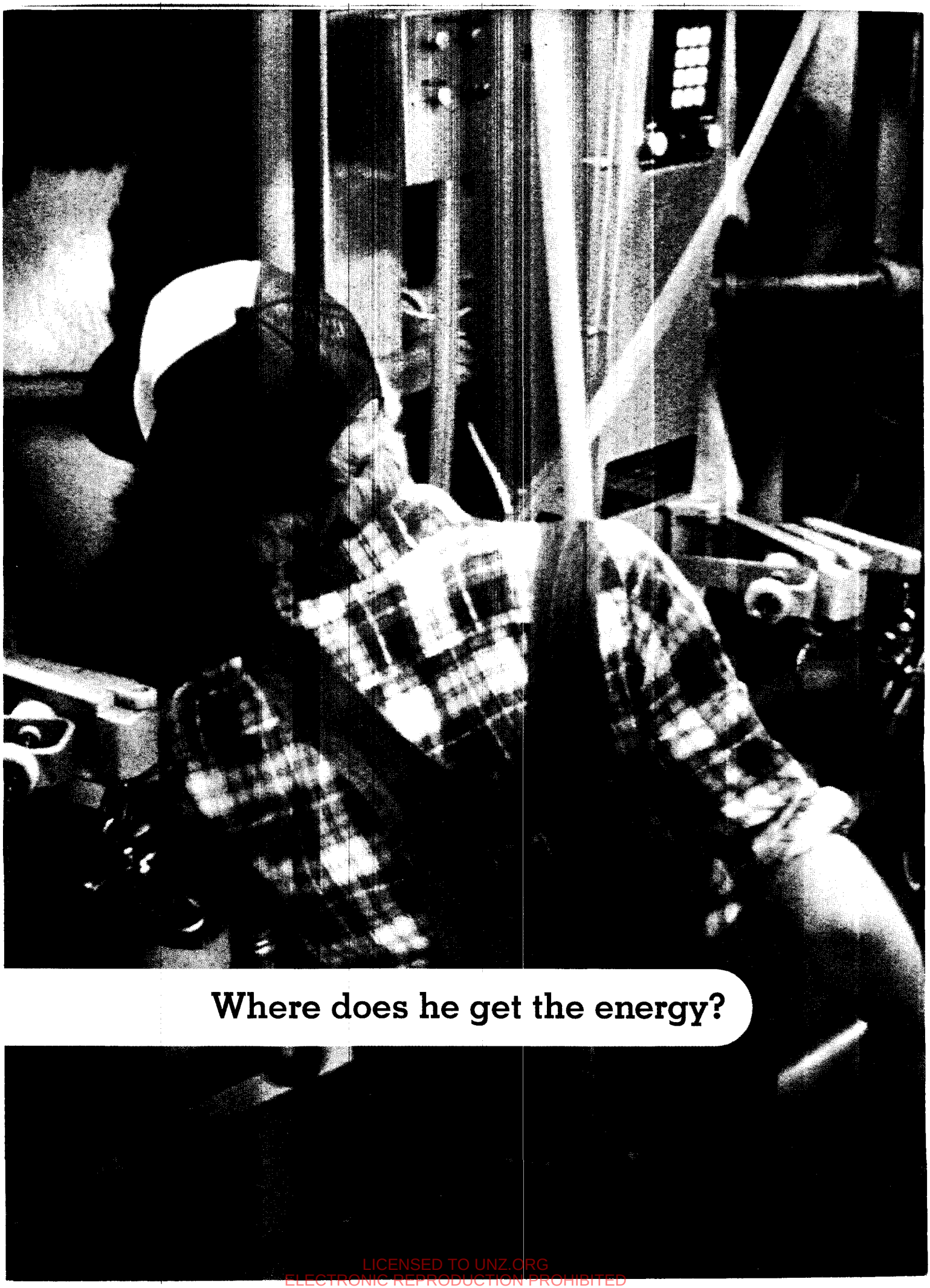

Where does he get the energy?

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■ LETTERS ■

LAWS AND LAWYERS

In his criticism of author Philip K. Howard's "confusions" at finding Americans incapable of telling right from wrong (May 28), David Gelernter puts all of the blame on lawyers. Rather than kill all of them, he would merely sue them, thus besting them at their own game. But we can't blame lawyers when it is we ourselves who have allowed the proliferation of statutes that provide the basis for the ridiculous court actions dismantling our society. The real solution is not to sue the lawyers but to repeal the laws.

W. Edward Chynoweth
Sanger, Calif.

WITH DIVERSITY . . . FOR ALL

I resent having my story "The Country of the Kind" misrepresented by John Derbyshire ("Situation Normal," June 11) to support his harebrained attack on single moms, homosexuals, Wiccans, and other deviants from the Republican ideal: ". . . the authorities have licensed one man to go around breaking into people's houses and trashing them, just to introduce some uncertainty into life."

Nothing of the sort. The protagonist is an outsider because he can't control his violence. The authorities have managed to prevent his attacks on people, but can't keep him from destroying property. The point of the story is just the opposite of what Derbyshire says it is: It is that a humane society won't and can't prevent any behavior that seriously harms no one. We need the widest possible diversity, including even right-wing pundits.

Damon Knight
Eugene, Ore.

WODEHOUSE REVISITED

The usually astute David Pryce-Jones ("A Day in the Life . . . ," June 25) is under the misapprehension that the Hay-on-Wye literary festival has never hosted a world leader of Bill Clinton's stature.

In the last century, Roderick Spode, founder and former leader of a fascist group called the Black Shorts and a famed designer of ladies' undergarments (under the name "Eulalie Soeurs"), took time off to grace the festival. By that time, Spode had traded in his shorts for pants and had taken to calling himself "Lord Sidcup." Festival-goers now in their 90s can still recall his lordship's spellbinding address, "Building a Bridge to the Isle of Wight." Like Bill Clinton's, Lord Sidcup's public life was also sheltered in a bubble of fantasy, one that burst when he was bunged in the eye with a potato during a rally. Fortunately for Mr. Clinton, in his public life—as in his private escapades—there appears no chance of any real penetration.

Janet Jackson
Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich.

ONE FOR THE ROAD?

As I read Andrew Stuttaford's "De-Demonizing Rum" (June 25), his reasoning seemed logical enough until I reached this sentence: ". . . the higher drinking age has coincided with a reduction in the number of deaths. But has this price been worth paying?" Which is more valuable: a college kid's right to drink or a person's life? This kind of thinking represents the dividing line between the conservative mainstream and the libertarian fringe. True conservatives believe that it is necessary to curtail certain individual liberties in order to uphold public morality and ensure the right to life.

Rebecca Oppenheimer
Stevenson, Md.

BRAVE NEW FAIRWAYS

Re the paragraph in "The Week" (June 25) on the Supreme Court's ruling in favor of pro golfer Casey Martin: The Court has now opened the door for further abuse of yet another of our national treasures. I can see it all now: Every marginal-to-mediocre golfer—with PGA card and "disability" du jour in hand—will be crisscrossing America's golf courses in a souped-up cart with a caddy sidecar, like bumper cars at Hershey Park. On the event of the first mid-course collision, federal traffic regulations covering rights of way, radar-controlled speeds, and blinking lights for inclement weather will be established. Then it'll be seat belts, air bags, and screens for errant balls in flight. As years go by we're apt to see . . . That's it! Enough with golf! My new game will be chess.

Robert W. Hamor
Lancaster, Pa.

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■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ In Zogby poll, 60 percent view President **Bush** favorably. . . . Among Bush's top 300 appointees, reports *National Journal*, 34 percent are Catholic, 34 percent are lawyers, 26 percent are Ivy League graduates, 15 percent served in **Clinton** administration, and 10 percent are black. . . . Treasury secretary **Paul O'Neill** blasts World Bank for its $225 billion in loans over the last ten years: "Visit some of the poorest nations in the world, and you will see that we have too little to show for it. . . . It's time for a new approach to eliminating poverty."

■ Senate minority leader **Trent Lott** discusses embryonic stem-cell research, on *Meet the Press*: "There are some delicate questions here, but the benefits are substantial, as we understand it, and they should be carefully considered. . . . This is an important issue that has potentially significant health benefits, and we should not ignore it." . . . In Ipsos-Reid poll, 49 percent of women support ban on all research into human cloning, but only 35 percent of men agree. . . . Surgeon general **David Satcher**, a Clinton administration holdover, issues report saying schools should distribute contraceptives.

■ Simon & Schuster will publish two books by Sen. **Jim Jeffords** (I., Vt.), one called *My Declaration of Independence* on reasons for bolting GOP, and another on politics more broadly. . . . Sen. **Robert Bennett** (R., Utah) on Jeffords fallout, in *Washington Post*: "There will be a satisfaction in the new Republican majority that he won't have a chairmanship." . . . Sen. **Jean Carnahan** (D., Mo.) doesn't say whether she'll run for reelection next year, and potential challenger, former representative **Jim Talent** (R., Mo.), also refuses to commit. . . . Former vice president **Dan Quayle** ponders running for governor of Arizona, reports *U.S. News & World Report*. . . . Illinois lieutenant governor **Corinne Wood** (R.) calls for boycott of Abercrombie & Fitch over catalog pornography, but Gov. **George Ryan** (R.) won't support her cause. . . . Michigan Republicans become so desperate for candidate to oppose Sen. **Carl Levin** (D.), nomination frontrunner is **Michael Skupin**, best known for appearance on TV show *Survivor*.

■ **Randy Forbes** (R.) wins special election in Virginia, to succeed late Rep. **Norm Sisisky** (D.), boosting GOP House majority to 6 seats. . . . Rep. **Albert Wynn** (D., Md.) on soft-money ban: "The assumption seems to be that in the absence of the allegedly corrupting influence of soft money, Congress could more effectively address the Patients' Bill of Rights, prescription drugs, the California energy crisis, etc. I find this underlying assumption false, naïve,

"You know, these could lead to some pretty unbearable self-righteousness."

and insulting." . . . **Walter Mondale** becomes latest in chorus of Democrats saying **Al Gore** should break silence and criticize Bush publicly. . . . **Pat Robertson** lobbies Congress for help in opening California oil refinery he recently purchased. . . . In Gallup poll, 23 percent of Americans say they're feminists, including 25 percent of women and 40 percent of Hispanics. . . . North Dakota chamber of commerce endorses dropping "North" from name of state.

■ Seattle policeman **Eric Michl** on why his colleagues take passive crime-fighting approach in black neighborhoods, in *Seattle Times*: "Parking under a shady tree to work on a crossword puzzle is a great alternative to being labeled a racist and being dragged through an inquest, a review board, an FBI and U.S. attorney's investigation and a lawsuit.". . . Invitation for Justice **Clarence Thomas** to speak at ACLU event in Hawaii rescinded after local board members protest, calling Thomas "an anti-Christ" and "a Hitler," arguing that having Thomas speak was "like having a serial murderer debate the value of life."

■ **Bono**, lead singer of U2, pens note to Sen. **Jesse Helms** (R., N.C.) after 79-year-old Helms attends first-ever rock concert: "Hope you had fun at the concert. We are really confusing the cynics with our friendship and our action in Africa. You are blessed, [as] I am to know you." . . . **Barbra Streisand** website urges Americans to "turn up your thermostat to 78 degrees when you're home, and 85 degrees when you're out," but *New York Post* reports singer's Manhattan home is kept "as cold as a meat locker." . . . Bill Clinton to Palestinian leader **Yasser Arafat**: "I'm a colossal failure, and you made me one." . . . Legislation for Smithsonian black-history museum on Mall gains momentum in Congress. . . . House committee approves national monument for **John Adams**, **Abigail Adams**, and **John Quincy Adams**. . . . **Richard Nixon**'s dog Checkers, made famous in 1952 speech, may be exhumed from Long Island pet cemetery and reburied on Nixon library grounds in California.

■ Following Cuban dictator's fainting spell, Rep. **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** says, "Bad news about **Castro**'s health is good news for everyone who loves freedom." . . . British defense study recommends continuing to bar women from "direct-fire close-combat roles." . . . Pope **John Paul II** makes first visit to Ukraine. . . . Russian president **Vladimir Putin** says his favorite **Jack Nicholson** movie is *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

■ Sen. **John McCain** (R., Ariz.) tells **David Letterman** about recent dinner with Bush: "It was very nice. There was the president and me, Laura and Cindy, and two food tasters." **NR**

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THE WEEK

■ The latest Clinton pardon scandal has provoked furious denials of any association with a notorious crime family: Thomas Gambino says he would never have anything to do with the Clintons.

■ Recent polls showing an average approval rating of 54 percent for President Bush prompted a premature media consensus that he faces a dire popularity problem. One poll showing 50 percent of the public approving of Bush was dramatically described as "the lowest approval rating for a president in five years," which neatly avoided comparisons to President Clinton's first six months in office (when he was supported by only 39 percent). That many voters disapprove of Bush is not surprising: The enduring partisan divide in the electorate means that a large number of voters would not credit him if he were to cure the common cold. But there is also some good news for Bush in the polls. He has improved his numbers among blacks (up to 36 percent) and Hispanics (59 percent). What should concern the White House is that the public has responded in a lukewarm fashion after the achievement of a large part of Bush's agenda: a popular tax cut and a bipartisan education bill. For the rest of the year, Bush is set to play defense: on a patients' bill of rights, on campaign-finance reform, on the minimum wage, on spending bills. Bush's problem isn't so much that his polls are drifting downward; it's that Washington is drifting away from his agenda.

■ Bret Schundler won big over ex-congressman Bob Franks in New Jersey's GOP gubernatorial primary last month. He won against long odds and an obviously hostile party establishment. Conservatives are particularly excited because Schundler is a pro-life tax cutter. He is widely regarded as the underdog once again in the general election against Democrat Jim McGreevey, but his past may point the way to another victory. He won three elections as mayor of Jersey City—dominated by Democrats and beset by social problems—in part by campaigning for school choice. Schundler did not deliver on this promise because he needed Trenton to pass enabling legislation, which never happened despite promises of support from former governor Christine Todd Whitman and Republican control of state government. If he combines a strong message on taxes with a realistic plan to bring even a limited form of school choice to New Jersey, Schundler will become one of the most exciting conservative candidates in recent memory to run for statewide office anywhere—and in one of the most unlikely places.

■ The Bush administration wants to spend another $18 billion on the military in 2002, a figure well below what secretary of defense Don Rumsfeld wanted and what is needed to restore the armed forces to vigorous health. In frank testimony before the Senate, Rumsfeld explained the downward spiral created by the failure to spend adequately on procurement throughout the 1990s. For instance, the desirable average age for naval aircraft is considered to be 11 years, but the average age has risen to 18 years. Just maintaining that average with the current naval force of 4,200 aircraft would mean building roughly 200 new planes a year. The Bush budget provides for just 88 new aircraft. So the American military will get more and more rickety, and the cost associated with "catching up" to previous standards for equipment and readiness will get higher and higher. The spin out of the Bush White House is that the smaller-than-hoped-for defense increase represents only a holding pattern until Rumsfeld comes up with a grand new defense strategy. But that strategy will now almost certainly have to be built around a reduced U.S. force. As for Rumsfeld's vaunted military transformation, "we cannot build a 21st-century force quite yet," he explained in his testimony, "because the 20th-century force we have is in serious need of repair." Oh well, maybe next century.

■ Apparently there was a quid pro quo attached to John McCain's campaign appearances on behalf of Republican House candidates last year. The Arizona senator is insisting that all GOP freshmen with whom he came in contact last fall must vote for his version of campaign-finance reform—as though support for constitutionally dubious advertising restrictions were a communicable disease. McCain is right to be nervous about the prospects of his pet project in the House, but minority Democrats may prove the biggest obstacle. They increasingly seem to realize that ensuring spending on voter-registration and get-out-the-vote efforts in their communities—which are part of what "soft money" pays for—is more important than obeying the platitudinous directives of the *New York Times*. So, McCain huffs, the *Times* puffs, but a vigorous and free system of federal elections may yet survive all the windbaggery.

■ Those conservatives who worried that the president's faith-based initiative would end up reducing the independence of religious groups are being vindicated by the legislative wrangling on the issue. Initially, it was assumed that groups that received federal funds would be allowed to use their own funds to finance religious activities. Now the administration is promising liberals in Congress that groups that engage in "sectarian worship, instruction, or proselytization" will have to form separate organizations to participate in federal programs. But there have been some improvements to the bill: More aid would come in the form of vouchers,

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Creating Incentives for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and professor of politics at New York University.

Shared interests in stability are a prerequisite for peace between Palestinians and Israelis. Depressed economic opportunity reduces Palestinian interests in stability, increasing the risk of violence, as witnessed in the current Intefada in which unemployed teenagers foster lawlessness, prompting harsh responses that create violence. Terrorism is another manifestation of such risk taking. I propose a revenue-sharing plan based on income from tourism that will create mutual interests in peace and stability even in the absence of mutual trust.

Since the 1980s many have held the view that Israeli-Palestinian joint ventures and other business investments would encourage Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace. These proposals suffer from a reliance on mutual trust. Substantial investments are unlikely in an atmosphere of civil unrest. Furthermore, joint ventures are sometimes perceived as economic imperialism.

Jerusalem, in addition to being a place of religious value, is a cash cow. Tourism produces vast amounts of income. Palestinian experts anticipate that tourism will be the major industry of an independent Palestinian state. Nevertheless, the Palestinians are at a disadvantage in competing for tourism moneys because of their lack of infrastructure and investment capital. This disadvantage, however, can become a major step toward peace.

Suppose all government tourist-generated revenues from *all* of Jerusalem were divided according to a fixed formula between the two sides. For instance, Israel's current population is about 6.3 million. The populations of Gaza and the West Bank are 2.9 million. Proportionality argues that about 31 percent of tourist revenue go to Palestine and 69 percent to Israel. This division is only one possible allocation. The key is that this pooled revenue be shared according to a prearranged *fixed* formula.

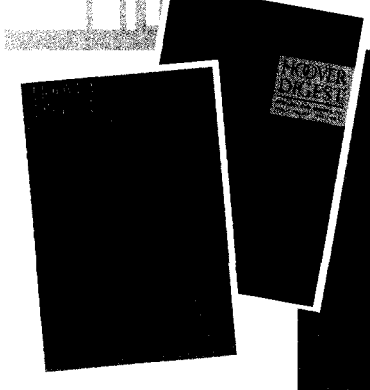
A revenue-sharing arrangement ties the wealth flowing to the Palestinians to their ability to enforce a tourist-friendly atmosphere. Tourist income ebbs and flows with violence. As the record low tourism in Bethlehem over the recent Christmas holiday makes clear, when peace is lacking, tourism declines. **In an arrangement that ties revenue to tourism, both Palestinians and Israelis have incentives to minimize violence.** Because tourism is currently so much weaker in Palestinian areas, the incentive is asymmetric. A fixed revenue-sharing arrangement, regardless of where the tourist income is generated, gives both sides an interest in seeing the pie expand and gives the Palestinian leadership reasons to control the Intefada and terrorism.

A shared-revenue arrangement encourages both sides to improve access to important religious, historic, and cultural sites, assuring access for everyone to the contested sites of Jerusalem and other parts of Israel and Palestine. Furthermore, investors will have incentives to build tourist trade in Palestinian-controlled areas because both sides will benefit (the Israelis to the degree that the proportion of total tourist revenue generated within Palestine increases).

This proposal does not resolve questions such as the right of return or the contiguity of territory, but it does offer a self-enforcing solution to one central problem. Pooling tourist revenue provides a firm foundation for reducing violence and paving the way for mutual administration of Jerusalem, thereby taking a significant step toward peace.

— Bruce Bueno de Mesquita

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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which offer fewer opportunities for regulatory intrusion. The remaining federal grants, though, would have a secularizing impact—not to mention a bureaucratizing one—on religious charities. Bush is giving congressional Republicans a difficult choice: enact a deeply flawed policy or vote down one of his signature initiatives.

■ The D.C. Appeals Court tossed out Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson's recommendation that Microsoft be broken in two. It also questioned his judgment about talking to the press. Unfortunately, it did not raise enough questions about the judge's factual findings. As Alan Reynolds has demonstrated (in "The Microsoft Antitrust Appeal," available at www.hudson.org), many of these findings were erroneous. Jackson claimed that Microsoft controls 95 percent of the market. But that figure was from a 1996 projection that was doctored to exclude Apple, Sun, and network computers. The appeals court did not question Jackson's figure, and even claimed Apple couldn't compete with Windows "because [Apple] costs considerably more." The appeals court also made a hash of the core of the case. Microsoft's offer of a free browser to customers was supposedly designed to ward off the threat of Netscape's browser, which could somehow have served as a substitute for Windows. The appeals court both goes along with this claim and notes that, technologically, it could not be true. With the government's basic complaint about Microsoft thus in limbo, all that is left are some minor complaints about exclusive contracts, many of which have already ended or (in the case of AOL) are about to end. This case should be expeditiously settled. It has already cost stockholders, consumers, and taxpayers enough.

■ The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act was first introduced last year to give legal protection to infants who survive abortions. NARAL and its pro-abortion sisters opposed it, believing that the right to choose abortion entails not only the right to "terminate a pregnancy" but to terminate a baby. The bill passed the House last year. This year, Sen. Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania introduced it as an amendment to the patients' bill of rights. It passed without opposition, 98–0. The pro-abortion groups didn't oppose it this time, hoping silence would allow it to pass unnoticed. But whatever their intentions, it appears likely that federal law will soon incorporate the idea that a child marked for abortion can have a right to life—and has that right whether or not his mother wants him.

■ If every action deserves an equal and opposite reaction, then the dissenting statement attached to the Florida report of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights should be a piece of reckless name-calling that makes bald assertions backed by no evidence. Instead, the document produced by the two GOP-appointed members, Abigail Thernstrom and Russell G. Redenbaugh, performs the surprising feat of offering new information on what really happened in Florida last November. It is, in fact, a piece of impressive scholarship. Working with statistician John Lott, Thernstrom and Redenbaugh show not only that rates of voter error were significantly higher in counties with Democratic election supervisors, but also that one of the variables associated with disqualified ballots was the supervisor's race: If he was black, the rate of spoilage increased. This is hardly the proof of a racist conspiracy led by Gov. Jeb Bush and secretary of state Katherine Harris—a claim the commission's dominant liberal members have tried to sell all year. Unfortunately, minority rights receive an honest treatment only in the commission's minority report.

■ The Bush administration has agreed to reconsider its predecessor's last-minute ban on snowmobiles in some of the nation's oldest national parks, including Yellowstone. Environmentalists are furious. They argue that a national park is not a winter wonderland for weekend Evel Knievels; it's a "sanctuary for nature." Maybe. But it would still be illegal to harass wildlife if the ban were removed. And technology has made the mechanized sleighs cleaner and quieter. Yellowstone is a mecca for snowmobilers; more than 80,000 of them rode through in the last three-month season. Their only crime is loving their national parks too much.

■ John Stossel's most recent hour-long special on ABC's *20/20* was a hit with viewers, suggesting that the environmental groups that ceaselessly attack him for disseminating the truth about issues like global warming and organic food do have reason to fear. Leading the howling pack, the Environmental Working Group reached a new low, contacting the parents of children Stossel had interviewed and scaring them into revoking their permission to show the children on television. The journalist did not let this deter him, however, finding a second group of kids who all confirmed his suspicions: Schools present only one side of the environmental debate, teaching children to fear an illusory ecological catastrophe allegedly perpetrated by dastardly corporations that earn profit at the expense of the public. The Environmental Working Group and its allies don't care about the truth—but John Stossel does. That's why he is invaluable.

What Arms Race?

It takes two to tango,
Lindy or two-step;
As one views the Russians,
Whose purported pep
Flags from too much vodka,
Graft and Afghan dope,
It's apparent Putin
Should abandon hope.

—W. H. von Dreele

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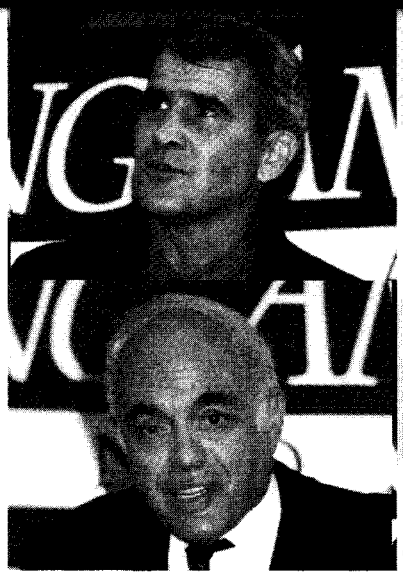

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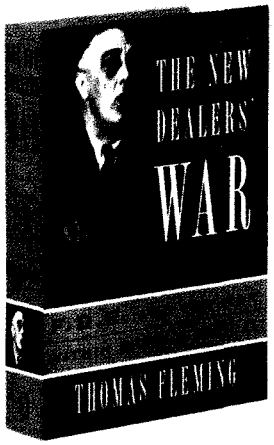

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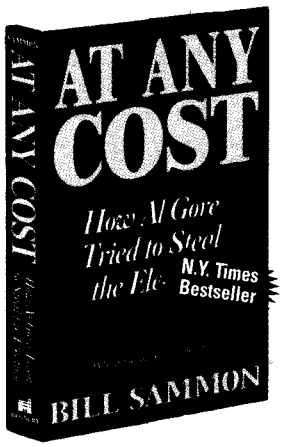

At Any Cost – Al Gore's maneuvering in the 36 days following the election was nothing short of attempted robbery. Now that the dust has settled get a no-holds-barred, behind-the-scenes account of the events in Florida from *Washington Times* reporter Bill Sammon. Citing countless inside sources and never-before-published evidence, he uncovers what no other reporter has: the truth!

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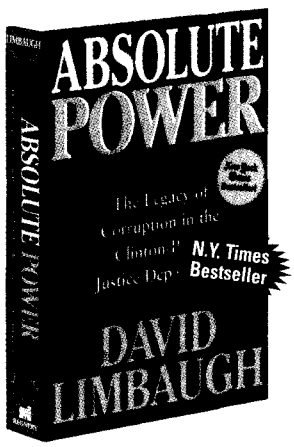

Absolute Power – David Limbaugh fearlessly reveals how far the Department of Justice has fallen during the misrule of Bill Clinton. We knew Janet Reno was corrupt, but now see how far she went to serve and protect the political interests of Bill Clinton and Al Gore. A stunning and haunting read that no lover of freedom can ignore.

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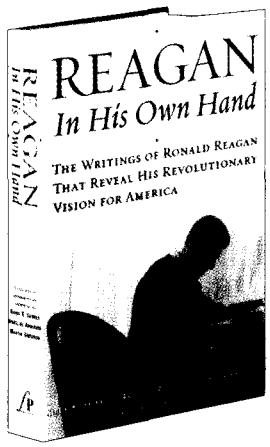

Reagan, In His Own Hand – For years liberals have accused Ronald Reagan of being a giant fake. They claimed that "The Great Communicator" was nothing more then an actor playing a part with great writers telling him what to say. This massive collection of Reagan's personal writings, some of them never published before, smashes that notion. Reagan's written word clearly reflects the passion he felt for conservative ideals and the people of this nation.

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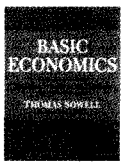

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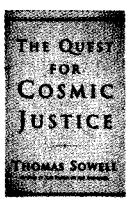

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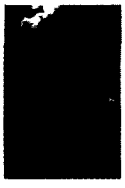

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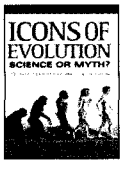

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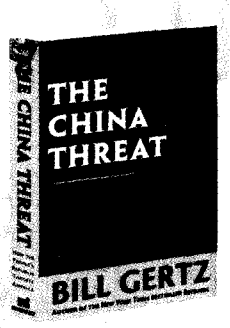

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■ The Bush administration has declared itself neutral as to whether Beijing should have the Olympic Games in 2008. We, on the other hand, are not neutral. The government in China should be denied the plum of these Games. The 1936 Games held in Germany—not only the Summer ones, but the Winter ones—were a great boon to the Nazis (contrary to American myth, springing from the success of Jesse Owens); Hitler emerged from those Games with his status greatly enhanced, and with a larger freedom to maneuver. There is no need for the Games to go to a country with a vast gulag system, a country that cracks heads at the first peep of political dissent. The Games in Beijing would not likely lead to an opening; they would almost certainly lead to a great sanitization, or Potemkinization, at which the Chinese Communists have proven themselves expert in the past. They would also break faith with the regime's many victims, who would be well out of sight. The International Olympic Committee now has to choose among Paris, Toronto, Osaka, and Beijing. We'll take Paris, or one of the two others—but not Red China.

■ Awaiting the IOC decision, China's rulers ought to be on their best behavior. Like the scorpion in Aesop's fable, though, they cannot be other than what they are. Natural instincts reasserted themselves on June 23 at a Three Tenors concert in the capital. A protester showed up outside the concert venue. We do not know what he was protesting, but an American news photographer, accredited to Agence France-Presse, took a picture of him. Seeing this, Chinese police dragged the photographer along the ground, punching him in the head and ribs all the while. The Beijing authorities have repeatedly told the IOC that news coverage during the Games would not be hindered. Unless, apparently, anyone dares to stage a protest while they are on.

■ Slobodan Milosevic, retired warlord, was sent to the United Nations war-crimes tribunal at The Hague to be tried for his role in the murders and deportations that marked his statesmanship. Serbs still motivated by perverted patriotism regret his journey—but they are not alone. Vojislav Kostunica, the Yugoslav president who defeated Milosevic in elections last October, wanted to try him at home, and, failing that, insisted that he be allowed his legal right to appeal. But his deportation was rushed through by other Yugoslav leaders, desperate for a quick infusion of Western aid and eager to duck the burden of judgment. How does this legal corner-cutting breed respect for law? In the international arena, the U.N.-backed trials at The Hague are symptomatic of a burgeoning transnational judiciary. Washington supported moving Milosevic because the war against him was (technically) an international operation. But what about the European judges who slap subpoenas on left-wing targets of the month, from Pinochet, to Sharon, to Kissinger? If anyone tried to nab a former secretary of state, we would of course bomb the bejeesus out of them. But that would put a needless moral onus on us. The fact remains that nation-states have been the only guarantor of human rights in the last 400 years. They often fail. But nothing better is in sight.

■ There is welcome news from the Bush administration. Elliott Abrams has joined the National Security Council staff, having the attractive portfolio of democracy, human rights, and international operations. Abrams has been a NATIONAL REVIEW contributing editor, and is one of the finest diplomatic minds and hearts known to us. The *New York Times*, in its story on his appointment, characterized Abrams as an Iran-contra figure, plain and simple. He was, it is true, done dirty—very dirty—by the Walsh operation; for details, see Abrams's book *Undue Process*. But he was also stalwart for freedom and democracy in Latin America during the Reagan years, the more important fact to know about him. That George W. Bush and his national security advisor, Condoleezza Rice, have reposed confidence in him says very good things, indeed.

■ Dr. David Satcher, the surgeon general, issued a report arguing that many evils could be averted with thorough and medically accurate sex education. The report said, among other things, that courses in abstinence do not work, that one in six Americans has genital herpes, that 22 percent of all women have been raped, and that all of the report's findings had been verified by Shrek, Harry Potter, and the tooth fairy.

■ After Andrea Yates drowned her five children, America was drowned in commentary. Much of it focused on the malady of postpartum depression, from which Mrs. Yates suffered: Perhaps that explained her terrible deed. Columnist Anna Quindlen took the same line, without the medical veneer: Raising young kids is so harrowing that "every mother" she talked to "at some forbidden level" understood Andrea Yates. Quindlen's error is closer to the truth. We all know evil, because it is all around us, and within our hearts. It can bring from high tension and short temper cruelty, small tyrannies, violence—for which God forgive us. It can even lead us to write columns that are depraved in their cleverness, disguised as sympathy. But in Mrs. Yates's case, it encouraged her to take a child to the tub and hold him under water until he died—then to repeat the deed four more times. We understand her because the heart of man is desperately wicked; if that understanding exists at a "forbidden level," it is because the culture is so drained of theological sophistication. But that doesn't mean Andrea Yates's offense is common, or that she is one whit less culpable.

■ American philanthropy has long been a bleak landscape for conservatives, as foundations built on the largess of the captains of industry—Ford, Carnegie, Mellon—have drifted leftward under the stewardship of later generations, sacrificing their founders' principles on the altar of trendy politically correct causes. Now into this breach comes the Foundation Management Institute (FMI), a group dedicated to reestablishing donor intent as the guiding principle behind foundation grant making. FMI—run by Neal B. Freeman, a longtime friend and director of NATIONAL

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REVIEW—and its Leadership Development Group make it their mission to recruit, recommend, and place executives who share the values of original donors in foundation-management positions across the country. FMI sees the next five years as a critical period for its mission, as more than 7,000 positions will open up nationwide, giving the individuals who fill those jobs the power to shape the course of American philanthropy for decades. Admittedly, correcting the left-wing bias of American foundations is the task of a lifetime, or several lifetimes—which is all the more reason to cheer FMI for taking it up.

■ Pope John Paul II has received a tricky letter from Adel Smith, head of the Union of Italian Muslims. He wrote to ask for the removal or destruction of a fresco in Bologna cathedral, a great medieval masterpiece. It is Giovanni da Modena's *Last Judgment*, painted in 1415. In a corner of Hell, the prophet Muhammad is shown naked, and condemned to burn eternally as a heretic. This, says Signor Smith, is more insulting than Salman Rushdie ever was, and he wants the teaching of Dante to be suspended for good measure. It is no good the Pope replying that Islam was at the time perceived as a military threat to Christian Europe. Then may well have been then, but now is most definitely now. About half a million Muslim immigrants from North Africa currently live in Italy, and about as many again are thought to be illegally in the country. Prime Minister Berlusconi's promise to address this illegal immigration played a large part in winning him the recent general election. How ingeniously multiculturalism spawns new quarrels in all directions.

■ Actor Carroll O'Connor has died, but his most indelible creation, Archie Bunker, the outer-borough primitive hero of *All in the Family*, lives on. He lives, in fact, two different lives, depending on who remembers him. To producer Norman Lear and his liberal soulmates, Bunker was the symbol of all that was obtuse about the lumpenproletariat (class disdain motivated them as much as ideological animus—a prejudice they never admitted). Most of the lumps who made the show a hit, however, sided with Bunker, because they partly agreed with his unreconstructed opinions, and because they understood that he was an average guy who wanted above all to be left alone. Every time his busybody creators gave him, via the script, another kick in the pants, sympathy for him grew. *All in the Family* may have been the greatest case of ideological backfire before the liberal attack on the Willie Horton ad. Bunker's persona depended on O'Connor's deeply inhabited characterization. R.I.P.

■ Jack Lemmon was one of the most popular actors in all of America. His persona was that of the nervous, perspiring, tie-tugging striver, a man living a life of quiet desperation, or sometimes not so quiet. Lemmon had an obvious intelligence, a quickness about him. A graduate of Phillips Andover and Harvard, he was expected to follow his father into business, but he had fallen in love with the stage early, and was particularly eager to make people laugh. He would make some of the best-loved movies of the second half of the century, including *Mister Roberts*, *Some Like It Hot*, and *Days of Wine and Roses*. Some of his movies were political in nature, most prominently *The China Syndrome* and *Missing*. In his politics, Lemmon was well on the left, the kind of actor who goes to Havana and sups with Castro. But he had his endearing qualities, including a desperate love of golf. He was a notably poor golfer; for more than 25 years, he tried vainly to make the cut at the Pebble Beach celebrity pro-am, known as the "Crosby clambake." His last movie was a golf one: *The Legend of Bagger Vance*. Lemmon, one of the most recognizable and best-liked men in America, died last month at 76. R.I.P.

■ American intellectual life lost one of its leading lights when Kenneth S. Lynn died last month at age 78. In a distinguished career at Harvard and Johns Hopkins, Lynn played a major role in promoting the serious study of American civilization. He published 15 books, including benchmark studies of Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Ernest Hemingway, and Charlie Chaplin. And he was quite simply one of the most graceful writers around. Lynn also was a tough, honest, and utterly fearless critic, who never hesitated to cross swords with our era's designated eminentoes. His exhilarating book of essays *The Air-Line to Seattle* (1983) is a veritable slaughterhouse of sacred cows; and his biographies of Hemingway and Chaplin relentlessly exposed the damage that leftist politics have done to our culture. Lynn, in his professional career, paid a price for such truth-telling; but his works will endure. R.I.P.

■ Mortimer Adler defiantly stood outside the mainstream of American academic philosophy. He was not a Deweyan instrumentalist, not an analytical positivist, certainly not a Rortyan relativist. Throughout his long career as a philosophical writer and educator, he held with Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas that there is such a thing as human nature, that there are metaphysical truths, and that ethical precepts are demonstrable. Precocious from birth, he completed the four-year course at Columbia in three years, but did not receive an A.B. because, famously, he refused to take the swimming test. But he then got a Ph.D. anyway, along with a Columbia appointment. In the 1920s, Jews were not welcome at Columbia, so the young Thomist and his brilliant contemporary Clifton Fadiman lit out for the territories. Adler was appointed in Chicago in 1930 by the new young president Robert Maynard Hutchins. There he inspired an emphasis on great books, which survives at the institution, as well as at Columbia, where it was promoted by John Erskine. Adler persisted in this evangelization into his administration of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and at the Aspen Institute. This remarkable man, a philosopher-at-large, a contrarian Jewish Thomist, will be a tutelary spirit waiting when the serious books make a comeback amid the unbearable lightness of being that is characteristic of the liberal-arts curriculum today. R.I.P.

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■ One of the editors of this magazine, browsing in a handbook for Roman Catholic priests, was interested to learn that "absolution by telephone is not valid." Other religions have a more relaxed attitude to the products of modern technology. Under Islamic law, a man has always been able to divorce his wife by saying "I divorce thee" three times. A jurist in Dubai has now declared that a text message to this effect, transmitted to the screen of a wife's cell phone, will do the trick. This ruling follows a case in which a woman received a text message from her husband saying: "I divorce you because you are late." We are just amazed that anyone can say *anything* three times on that weeny little screen.

■ High-school boys going straight to the NBA? Why not? Better that than requiring them to spend four years in an institution of higher learning, pretending to be learning. On the other hand, Bill Bradley was both a basketball star and a Rhodes Scholar, and look how he turned out.

■ There's still a Communist party in Germany, though it now calls itself the Party of Democratic Socialists, or PDS. Come August, it will be 40 years since the Berlin Wall went up, and the PDS chairman is ready to make a statement on that subject. He thinks that "there cannot be any justification for it in retrospect." Another 40 years, and the Communists may well admit another mistake.

THE CONSTITUTION

In Need of Amendment

FOR all the progress that homosexuals have made in public opinion, "gay marriage" remains deeply unpopular. In 1996, the federal Defense of Marriage Act—defining marriage as a union of a man and a woman for purposes of federal law, and allowing states not to recognize gay marriages formed in other states—passed the House with 342 votes and the Senate with 85. Polls find solid majorities against same-sex marriage. Even in socially liberal California, a ballot initiative to block gay marriage passed with 61 percent of the vote last year.

Yet gay marriage may be on its way whatever the people think. Gay activists are working through the courts to force gay marriage on an unwilling public. Their game plan is perfectly clear: Get a court somewhere, anywhere—in Hawaii, in Vermont, wherever they can win—to impose gay marriage. Then use courts to force other states to recognize that state's same-sex marriages. Then get states that recognize out-of-state gay marriages to start letting such marriages be formed in-state.

Politicians seeking to avoid controversy—including, notably, Dick Cheney in last year's vice-presidential debate—have pretended that whether gays should be allowed to marry each other is a matter that can be left to individual states to determine. But this is willfully naïve. There is no popular demand for gay marriage in any state. What is going on is an attempt to use the judiciary of any state to override the wishes of the people of that state, and then of the entire Union. It is an attempt that should be stopped by a constitutional amendment.

Constitutional amendments are not to be proposed lightly. The Constitution, wisely, makes them difficult to enact. Conservatives, in particular, favor stability in the nation's basic law. But the judicial campaign for same-sex marriage leaves constitutional amendment as the only sure way to prevent a harmful and antidemocratic revolution in American law. Thirty-four states have passed laws that seek to preserve the understanding of marriage as the union of a man and a woman—enough to call a constitutional convention for the purpose of an amendment, and close to enough to ratify one. To defend a valued institution, an institution the importance of which can hardly be overestimated, from what amounts to an ideological attack is a cause that all conservatives should support.

REPUTATIONS

A Tangled Web

DAVID BROCK is a liar. On this point, everyone agrees, including Brock himself. Brock used to be a conservative journalist, and in that capacity wrote a book defending Clarence Thomas called *The Real Anita Hill*. In recent years, Brock has taken to disavowing his previous work. In a new book that has been excerpted in *Talk*, he has gone so far as to claim that he lied in his book on the Hill–Thomas controversy and in follow-up articles. He says that Justice Thomas had a friend give Brock damaging information about a woman who was backing up Hill's account—information Brock then used to threaten the woman to change her story.

One oddity is that the lies to which Brock has admitted are peripheral. They concern subordinate points in the case for Thomas and against Hill. He is not saying that the balance of evidence now suggests that Thomas made lewd remarks to Hill and then lied about it. His earlier book, as modified by the *Talk* excerpt, still leaves the balance on Thomas's side. But perhaps Brock will offer new revelations that change that conclusion.

Or perhaps he will reveal that he is lying in *Talk*. Or that he lied a little in his book on Anita Hill, and lied a little more in his denunciation of it. By calling the truth of anything he says into doubt, Brock has become a one-man Cretan paradox. Tina Brown and Random House should let him fade into well-deserved obscurity.

OUR PAGES

Why Poetry?

IN its now distant earliest days NATIONAL REVIEW regularly included a worthy poem in its Books, Arts & Manners section, the poetry editor then being the master critic Hugh

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Kenner. Now, after many years, NR is undertaking to do so again.

From its beginning, NR has been attentive to language in its various modes, always seeking "the right word," if I may appropriate here the title of a recent book by William F. Buckley Jr. Poetry has many definitions, but common to most of them is the idea that, because of its formal qualities, poetry puts a special pressure on language. Every word counts. A good poem will not admit imprecision, banality, or even a hint of cliché. That is what Eliot meant when he wrote that poetry "purifies the language of the tribe."

With this in mind, NR is pleased to announce that beginning with this issue and continuing thereafter we will publish a poem of brief or moderate length. The great majority will be new poems, but once in a while readers will be refreshed from literary history. The energies of a fine poem are not exhausted but rather are refreshed by time. Our criteria will always be lucidity, importance, and pleasure. We incline toward traditional form, but do not excommunicate experiment. Unsolicited contributions will not be considered.

—JEFFREY HART

CHAMPION'S LIGHT by Daniel Mark Epstein, page 54

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Memo to: WFB
From: Rich

I think our readers will want to have the big news about Jay Nordlinger. He won the Eric Breindel Award for Excellence in Opinion Journalism.

The award is made by the News Corporation, and was presented at a ceremony by Rupert Murdoch and Lally Weymouth. It is given annually in honor of the company's late editor and executive, our old friend Eric Breindel. It is rumored to be the most lucrative ($10,000) award in journalism and is given to the journalist who exemplifies the "spirit" of Eric Breindel: one who demonstrates "love of country and its democratic institutions" and who "bears witness to the evils of totalitarianism."

Jay won the award for writings having to do with race relations, Cuba, China, Bob Jones University, and patriotism.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Upon reading your book *Let Us Talk of Many Things*, I came across a little gem of historical repetition.

On page 285, you recall then-Vice President Walter Mondale remarking that Mr. Reagan's proposed tax cuts would enable the wealthy to buy a new Mercedes, while a teacher could buy only a hubcap. Sound familiar? Replace Mercedes with Lexus and hubcap with muffler. Apparently this bit of rhetorical flourish is something that crops up every two decades.

Using that timetable, I expect to hear it again in 2020 when Mayor Richard Lowry of New York City runs for the GOP presidential nomination.

What will it be then, a BMW and an oil change?

Bryan G. Stewart
Winter Park, Fla.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Regarding your response to Mr. Harry R. Schaub of Mobile in "Notes & Asides" (April 2 issue) that you did not know how we got the abbreviation "Mr.," it is short for "Master," just as "Mrs." comes from "Mistress." The derivation of "Mr." is equivalent to the Spanish *Sr.*, which is short for *Señor*. The plural of "Mr." is "Messrs.," though some say this should be employed only in describing brothers. I disagree, as such a neat form should be used whenever possible.

We owe this plural to the French, as it is short for *Messieurs*, the plural of *Monsieur*, which is abbreviated *M.* The plural for "Mrs." also comes from the French: "Mesdames." Sadly, I seem to be the only person ever to use that form.

I do have some consolation, however, in that you have given me a chance to show off, and thus prove this information is not completely useless.

Yours very truly,
Michael O. Eshleman
Kings Mills, Ohio

Dear Mr. Eshleman: Thanks for the enlightenment.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Nearly four years have passed, but still the memory haunts me.

I had settled into my Emirates Air jetliner, departing Sri Lanka after a tour of duty at our embassy in Colombo. Sri Lanka is a lovely country, but journalistic standards there are execrable. Thinking that my latest copy of NR would offer an antidote to four years of mangled prose, I was aghast to read that so-and-so was "hung by the neck until dead" (not "hanged").

I felt at that moment that the world offered no firm ground on which to stand. This solecism cut me loose from all cherished standards of grammar. Psychologists believe that "repressed memories" should not be bottled up. In that spirit, I unburden myself to you in the hope that you will advise me how best to "move on."

Is it too late to chastise the offending editor? Should I seek professional help?

Sincerely,
William C. Dawson Jr.
Lexington, Va.

Dear Mr. Dawson: I agree, but the rule is not absolute, viz., "Frontier courts hung a lot of people without an extensive trial." But we'll keep our eyes open.

Cordially,

—WFB

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■ PUBLIC POLICY ■

Cells, Fetuses, and Logic

Who is being sentimental, who rational, in this debate?

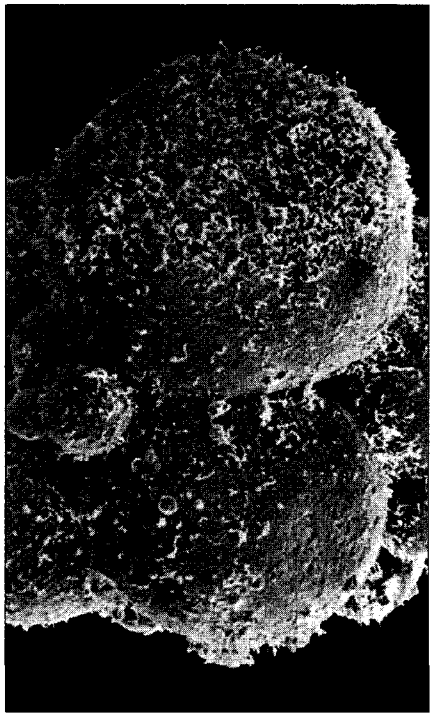
RAMESH PONNURU

AMERICANS' attitudes toward abortion are notoriously muddled. But it is safe to say that they tend to dislike pro-lifers more than pro-choicers, even when they themselves favor curbs on abortion. Pro-lifers have a suspect, a frightening, passion. They are agitators; they are religious zealots. Pro-choicers, on the other hand, are the party of reason. They see all the pitfalls of prohibiting abortion. They understand that abortion raises issues much more complex than sentimental slogans about "protecting unborn babies" can capture.

This is, I think, a widespread view about the combatants in the abortion wars. It is also close to 180 degrees from the truth. Sentiment has been the pro-choicers' ally more often than not. The pro-life position, on the other hand, must ultimately be rooted in rigorous logic. A pro-life position that is merely sentimental is a weak and unsustainable thing—as demonstrated, most recently, in the controversy over embryonic stem-cell research.

Pro-choicers can depend more reliably on sentiment than pro-lifers for the simple reason that distressed pregnant women elicit more sympathy than endangered fetuses. Nobody remembers being a fetus. Nobody has held a fetus's hand. But many women know what it is like to be pregnant under difficult circumstances, or can easily imagine it. All of us, men and women alike, have known or can imagine a woman we care about in that situation: a sister, a friend. The fetus has almost no emotional claim on us. It—we think of the young fetus as an "it," not a "he" or "she," although of course every fetus has a chromosomally determined sex—is an abstraction to us, usually nameless.

Smart people have attempted to found moral theory on natural sentiments: One thinks of no less a figure than Adam



Smith. But these attempts are doomed. Untutored sentiment is a poor guide to morality. No profound knowledge of history or psychology is necessary to see that our sympathy often fails to recognize the legitimate moral claims of those we do not know or of those we do not look like. Tender feelings alone cannot lead us to grasp the requirements of decency or justice. It takes abstract reasoning to tell us, first, that the fetus is a living human being, and then to follow that premise to the eventual conclusion that abortion is a violation of human rights.

To say that the pro-life position is rooted in abstract logic is not, of course, to deny that its adherents possess strong emotions about the matter, or even that their emotions are stronger than those of pro-choicers. As Richard Brookhiser has remarked in this connection, thoughts, if they are taken seriously, do not lie idly on the mind's table. They lead to further thoughts, and emotions and sensibilities form around them like crystals.

Nor do I mean to suggest that pro-lifers never make non-rational appeals. Many pro-choicers find the pro-life movement's rhetoric about "babies" manipulative. Fetuses aren't babies, they say. But pro-lifers don't really hold the views they hold because they think fetuses are babies; rather, they know that fetuses are members of human race. (Fifteen-year-olds, 31-year-olds, and 62-year-olds aren't babies, either, but nobody thinks it's okay to kill them.) The campaign against partial-birth abortion is an attempt by pro-lifers to win support from Americans in the "mushy middle" by stressing the grisliness of some abortions. But pro-lifers took up that campaign as a tactic, not because they really believe one method of abortion is worse than another.

For pro-choicers, however, an appeal to sentiment is frequently not merely a tactic or a bit of loose rhetoric but the entirety of the argument. Katha Pollitt, *The Nation*'s engaging feminist columnist, jeers at pro-lifers for fretting about the fate of clusters of cells smaller than a fingernail. But surely size cannot be our criterion for determining when rights should be protected.

If the appeal of sentiment has been powerful in the debate over abortion, it has been irresistible in the one over embryonic stem cells. Research using these cells may yield cures or treatments for Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, and other ailments. But the extraction of the cells, and thus the research, requires the destruction of embryos. A recent cover story on stem cells in *Newsweek* was typical of press coverage in following the usual script of pro-life religious fanatics vs. science. But this is in fact a conflict in which the average person's emotional reaction is almost completely one-sided. On the one hand, people—movie stars, relatives of congressmen and journalists, your next-door neighbor—with terrible diseases. On the other hand, what looks like a clump of cells in some lab.

Indeed, the pro-abortion writer Anna Quindlen has advocated stem-cell research on the precise grounds that it would make people even more emotionally inclined to dismiss concerns about abortion: "[S]ome who believe that life

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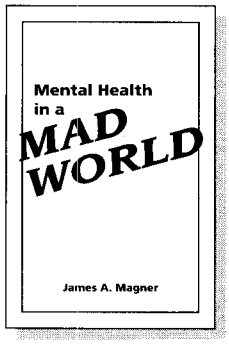

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begins at conception may look into the vacant eyes of an adored parent with Alzheimer's or picture a paralyzed child walking again, and take a closer look at what an embryo really is." Quindlen would have us judge difficult moral questions by taking a look and forming a picture—by acts of dumb perception rather than of intellection. This is not surprising coming from a woman whose nonfiction oeuvre practically constitutes a sustained implicit brief against the application of logic to social controversies.

More surprising, perhaps, is that many people who are usually pro-life have adopted this way of thinking, or rather not thinking, to justify embryonic stem-cell research. Here is Republican senator Orrin Hatch speaking to the *New York Times*: "I just cannot equate a child living in the womb, with moving toes and fingers and a beating heart, with an embryo in a freezer." He has made similar comments elsewhere, with particular emphasis on the womb/freezer distinction and the embryo's lack of visibly human characteristics. But surely neither temperature nor location is morally decisive. Nobody would question whether a twelve-year-old who had been conceived in a lab was a human being entitled to full rights as such.

Wall Street Journal editor Robert Bartley, who while not a pro-lifer himself is a frequent ally of pro-lifers, has made a similar argument for embryonic stem-cell research. Using the term for a six-day-old embryo, he writes, "I would find a funeral service for a blastocyst grotesque." Most miscarriages do not occasion funerals either, but presumably Bartley would not deny that what miscarriages end are tiny human lives. Blastocysts may not look like human beings at first glance. But on reflection, they look *exactly* like human beings—exactly like human beings at that stage of development; exactly like all of us once looked. (Not that stem-cell research and miscarriages raise the same moral issues. Michael Kinsley remarks in *Time* that since pro-lifers are not exercised about the thousands of miscarriages that happen every year—a "mass slaughter of embryos"—they shouldn't oppose the destruction of a few embryos for medical research. This is a miscarriage of logic. The elderly die in large numbers every year, too, but that doesn't mean it's okay to extract organs they need to survive for research purposes.)

One virtue of the pro-life position is its clarity. Life begins at conception, and taking human life can be allowed under only the strictest of circumstances. Pro-choicers have a much harder time drawing a line past which life is unambiguously protected. Their views of when life begins generally fall into one of three categories: 1) The fetus, like Schrödinger's cat, exists in a kind of suspended state of life/non-life until the mother decides what she wants; 2) there is some continuum in which a fetus that is not a human life gradually becomes one; or 3) we don't really need to think about this obscure theological mystery. (Oddly enough, in the philosophical literature on abortion it is more common to see pro-choicers speculating on when "ensoulment" might occur than to see pro-lifers pondering the question.) In practice, they appear to draw the line at birth. At least their most powerful contingent, the judges, do.

When do pro-life supporters of stem-cell research believe life begins?

A pro-life position not rooted in logic ends up having the same line-drawing problem. When do pro-life supporters of stem-cell research believe life begins? They would seem to believe that a clump of matter that is not a person somehow becomes inhabited by a person as it develops. Rather than defend this theoretical disaster bordering on superstition, some of these pro-lifers have resorted to the name games that pro-choicers have used in the past: Blastocysts aren't embryos, embryos that have not been implanted are pre-embryos, etc. But none of these nominal distinctions—nor the biological distinctions they denote—mark a point of moral distinction.

Bartley describes himself as a member of the "mushy middle" on abortion as though it were good in itself not to draw principled distinctions. He opposes partial-birth abortion because it is ugly, supports stem-cell research because nobody grieves for blastocysts, seeks a middle ground because the extremists are off-putting: a clump of positions united only by sensibility.

The trouble with this middle ground is that, in addition to giving up territory that should be defended, it is itself indefensible territory. Slippery slopes are slippery because the logic that starts you down them will lead you further down. During the stem-cell debate, people have said that it's okay to use embryos for research because we already "discard" plenty of embryos as a byproduct of *in vitro* fertilization; they could with equal validity say that we should allow research on five-month-old fetuses because we allow them to be aborted. Judges have said that we have to allow partial-birth abortion, or even euthanasia, because we allow abortion. The *Washington Post* says that the logic of abortion rights does not permit the law to charge people with murder when they kill an unborn child in the course of an assault on a pregnant woman, even if the woman considers it murder.

Slippery-slope arguments rarely succeed because people discount the possibility of remote future horrors; they think they will be able to stop the slide. But horrors can get less horrible as the future becomes less remote. People adjust their sensibilities. In 1973, not even pro-abortion lawyers were challenging Texas's law against partial-birth abortion. Back then, embryo-killing research would have seemed monstrous. I have read the argument (in *Reason*, the libertarian magazine, as it happens) that people predicted all kinds of dire consequences from *in vitro* fertilization that did not happen, so why not allow cloning? One of the dire consequences of *in vitro* fertilization, however, is precisely that we are debating cloning now.

A common trope of the press coverage of the stem-cell conflict—which reeks of weariness at the continued existence of pro-lifers—is that it's a shame this "scientific issue" has gotten caught up in the "politics" of abortion. But it is caught up in the issue because the premises of the arguments are the same: Either conception results in a new human being deserving of legal protection or it doesn't. No amount of sophisticated hairsplitting over bioethics is going to work if it ignores that awkward, obvious question. **NR**

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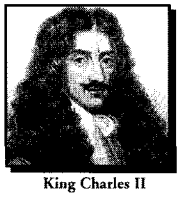
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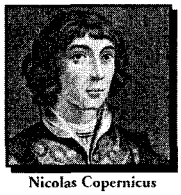
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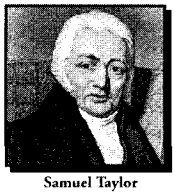
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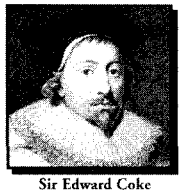
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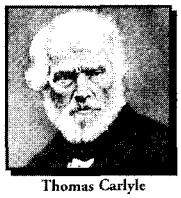
Thomas Carlyle

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He is author or editor of more than 40 books, including *Wild Beasts & Idle Humours: The Insanity Defense from Antiquity to the Present* (Harvard 1996), *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (3rd edition, Wisconsin, 1995), *The Mind: An Oxford Reader* (Oxford, 1998) *and Aristotle's Psychology* (Columbia, 1989).

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■ POLITICS ■

Cheney's Secret List

Like Hillary, like Dick?

BYRON YORK

BILL CLINGER had a question for Dick Cheney. It was mid May, and Clinger—a Pennsylvania Republican who retired a few years ago from the House of Representatives, where he had served as chairman of the Government Reform Committee—had come to the Capitol to hear the vice president give a preview of the administration's new energy policy. Democrats were attacking Cheney for keeping the workings of his energy task force a secret, accusing him of trying to cover up the involvement of big campaign contributors from the oil and gas industry. Clinger's old nemesis, Rep. Henry Waxman, suggested that Cheney might have violated something called the Federal Advisory Committee Act—known to wonks as FACA—which requires government groups to open their meetings to the public if the meetings include outsiders as well as federal employees. Back in 1993, Clinger had raised the same questions about Hillary Rodham Clinton's health-care task force—which did, as it turned out, include dozens of outsiders—and now he wanted to know whether Cheney had reason to worry. "I said, 'God, I hope you've taken a page out of our book and made sure you're not in violation of FACA,'" he recalls telling the vice president. Not to worry, Cheney replied. "He said they had given that very, very close consideration, and that they were clean," Clinger says.

Close consideration is almost an understatement; senior White House aides say Cheney's staff carefully studied the Clinton health-care debacle as they put together what became known officially as the National Energy Policy Development Group. To avoid the pitfalls of the former First Lady's task force, Cheney kept the energy group small—just twelve people, all of them high-ranking government officials. He kept the staff small, too—half a dozen people, also government employees. And while outsiders were consulted—representatives from energy companies, independent think tanks, and environmental groups, among others—officials involved in the effort say none played a role in policy development. In short, Cheney followed all the rules. "It's pretty much a slam dunk," says one White House official. "We're well on the bright side of FACA."

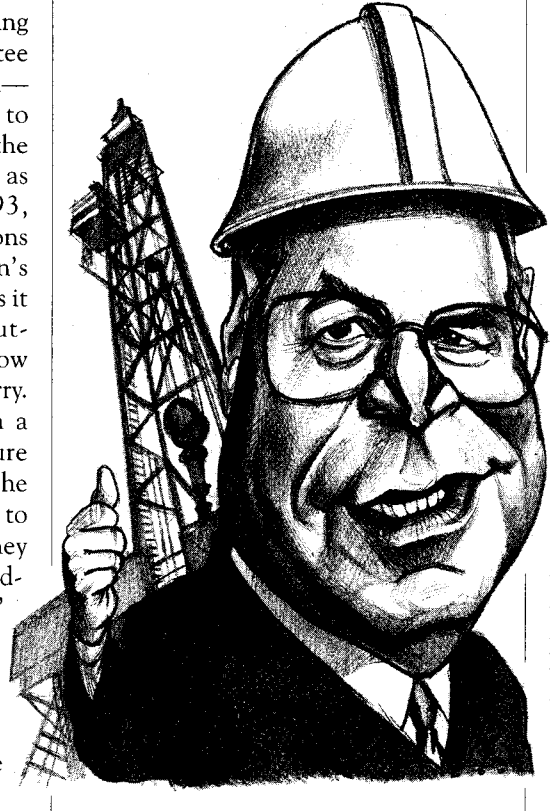
But Cheney may still face a politically damaging controversy over the issue, because Waxman has asked the General Accounting Office, Congress's investigative agency, to conduct a probe into the workings of the task force, including the question of who met with whom. And so far, Cheney has refused to give much information to the GAO—a response that could lead to a head-knocking test of wills between the White House and Congress.

The fight began on April 19, when Waxman and John Dingell, ranking Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, sent the Cheney task force's chief of staff a series of questions about the group's meetings. "It is our understanding that these meetings took place at federal facilities with the participation of both federal employees and private citizens and groups, including political contributors," they wrote, a situation that "may violate the letter and the spirit of the Federal Advisory Committee Act."

Two weeks later, Cheney sent a curt response. "Please be advised that the FACA does not apply" to the energy task force, the vice president's counsel, David Addington, wrote, explaining that all members and staff of the group were federal employees. Nevertheless, "as a matter of comity between the legislative and executive branches," Addington answered some questions, such as how many staffers were involved in the group and how often it met. But he would not discuss which outside groups were consulted. Waxman and Dingell immediately declared themselves "troubled" by Cheney's "insufficient response." "Your actions only serve to deepen public suspicion over the Administration's apparent efforts to shield the membership and deliberations of the task force and its staff from public scrutiny," they wrote.

About the same time, Cheney received a long list of questions from the GAO. The vice president responded with a few more answers, but still held the line on the names of those consulted by the energy group. Waxman and Dingell declared themselves "astounded" by Cheney's "stonewalling."

But while Waxman and Dingell, as members of the House minority, had no power to force Cheney to do anything, the GAO presented more difficult problems. On June 7, Cheney sent the GAO a densely argued letter claiming the agency had no authority to investigate. Cheney said the GAO's power was limited to financial accounting; he also argued that President Bush, in establishing the task force, was acting within the constitutional powers given the nation's chief executive, powers that were beyond the GAO's reach. Cheney even hinted that the White



Dick Cheney by Ismael Roldan

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House might resort to executive privilege to keep the names secret.

On June 22, the GAO sent back an even more densely argued response, which claimed wide-ranging authority to investigate the task force. GAO general counsel Anthony Gamboa, citing a law that gives his agency the power to "investigate all matters related to the receipt, disbursement, and use of public money," argued that "it would be difficult to conceive of language giving any official greater discretion than does the language in the statutory provisions at issue." Gamboa threatened to go to court to get the information.

■

'A guy like Cheney is saying, "Why the hell is anybody asking us about this?"'

■

White House officials say they were surprised and a little taken aback by the hard edge of Gamboa's response. Even as that letter was arriving, Cheney sent the GAO about 75 pages of financial documents that the vice president said would answer some of the agency's questions. But he stood firm on the list of task-force participants. And that is where things stand at this writing.

Cheney's main reason for not releasing the names is that it would hamper the administration's ability to seek advice from outsiders. "People will not engage us in candor" if they know their advice will appear in the newspapers, says one Cheney aide. "We would be chilling the process in the future." While that is a genuine concern, it also appears that Cheney is refusing to give up the names because the GAO is trying to force him to; a position that could prove politically costly for the vice president. Even if he can prove he has no legal obligation to give up the names, he might find himself under increasing pressure—from Republicans as well as Democrats—to release the list. In the end, Cheney, while maintaining his right to secrecy, might decide to release the information in the interest of clearing the air. "Who met with whom," says a White House aide, "is a story we want to tell, but we don't want to tell it in response to those inquiries. I would venture to say that in the normal course of things, much of this information would be made available. It's just when somebody rides up and points a gun at you and says you have to disclose this, that presents a different set of issues for lawyers in charge of constitutional prerogatives."

Meanwhile, Republicans in Congress are a little nervous. They are naturally inclined to defend Cheney against Waxman's attacks, but wish they had a bit more information on which to base their defense (Cheney's not telling them much, either). "We think what Cheney did was stupid, perception-wise, but it was legal," says one senior House aide. And it didn't have to happen; some in the GOP believe the vice president could have made things easier by making an arrangement with House Republicans in which they—and not Waxman—asked for the information. "The White House could have reached out to us and said, 'Write us a letter asking us to explain this,'" says the House aide. "But a guy like Cheney is saying, 'Why the hell is anybody asking us about this?'"

Meanwhile, Waxman presses on with his "What are they hiding?" campaign. In late June, he appeared on the talk show *Hardball* and used the occasion to take several jabs at Cheney. "We ought to know who they met with and what the recommendations were that were given to this energy task force," he said, "just as the Clintons should have done that when they had the health-care task force."

"Did you say that at the time?" host Chris Matthews asked.

"No," answered Waxman. "It wasn't—it wasn't an issue."

Faced with statements like that, most Republicans find it hard to suppress the urge to attack Waxman for hypocrisy; certainly there's a lot of material to work with. But partisan feuding aside, Republicans on the Hill are asking themselves whether it makes sense for Cheney to go to the mattresses over the task-force issue. At some point, the vice president might be forced to admit that it's better to go public than continue a fight he will lose even if he wins. **NR**

■ **THE MILITARY** ■

A Soldier's Civic Duty?

Playing mayor and other things in the Balkans

RICHARD LOWRY

WITNESS the marvel of the American military, the best trained and equipped fighting force in the world. When on duty in Kosovo, First Sergeant William Burns led a weekly meeting in the town of Pones, a village where violence against ethnic Albanians during the war had been relatively light, but where the majority Albanians had murdered five Serbs in revenge. Hate, of course, is not a family value, nor one that the United States will tolerate in the Balkans. Hence, Burns's weekly meetings. As reported in *Foreign Affairs* magazine, the confabs were part encounter session, part pep talk, meant once and for all to get the Albanians and Serbs in Pones to get along.

Among the agenda items, according to *Foreign Affairs*, was the hiring situation at Glama, "a local quarry where American soldiers tried to enforce a crude form of affirmative action. U.N. administrators, who technically control the quarry and all other formerly state-run enterprises in Kosovo, reserved 30 percent of the jobs at Glama for local Serbs. American soldiers provided security during the tense job interviews that followed." In the Balkans, the American military is not just the world's policemen, it is its human-resources department as well.

As Albanian extremists stir the pot in Macedonia—the former Yugoslav republic that borders Kosovo—international pressure will build for extending American involvement in the region. Thus George W. Bush's campaign talk of exiting the Balkans is going the way of the 33 percent top rate (he now says he is open to sending more troops there).

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Bush's pledge had come in the context of his determination to renew the American military, by, among other things, increasing its funding to develop a new generation of weapons and ending nation-building missions that serve only to the degrade its fighting capability. Now the funding won't be forthcoming, and neither will a Balkan pullout. Instead of a new generation of weapons, we're getting a generation of involvement in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Defenders of the Balkan commitment like to point out that only 10,000 or so U.S. troops serve as peacekeepers there. But that force has a huge "logistical tail" that requires the work of thousands and thousands of additional soldiers to support the troops on the ground. Meanwhile, both prior to rotating in and after rotating out of the Balkans, soldiers are tied up in training and retraining, since the skills required to be the mayor of a small Kosovo town are almost exactly counter to those necessary to fighting a war (which is why, traditionally, civilians have been mayors and active-duty soldiers have not). Make no mistake: Peacekeeping in the Balkans is a major drain on the U.S. Army.

Is it worth it? The hard-headed case for involvement—which tries to justify it on grounds of national interest and not just morality—is twofold. One argument is that that it is necessary to keep together NATO. But this risks confusing means and ends. NATO is simply a means to promote U.S. interests, and must always be considered an important tool for a policy, not its driving rationale. The other argument—heard especially when the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo were hot—is that U.S. intervention is necessary to keep conflict from spreading, especially to the major powers. But as Richard K. Betts writes in the latest *National Interest*, noting the damage to U.S. relations with Russia and China from the Kosovo war: "Intervention worsened conflict among great powers instead of dampening it."

U.S. involvement in the Balkans has always been primarily an exercise in Wilsonian moralism. On those terms, it can claim considerable success: stopping murderous Serb adventures in Bosnia and Kosovo, and hastening the ouster of Slobodan Milosevic. Helping give Milosevic the boot was a clear and achievable political objective. The goal of the West's continued occupation of Bosnia and Kosovo now is much murkier. It makes sense only as a nation-building endeavor, as a way to fashion Bosnia and Kosovo in a new image. This means prompting nothing short of a revolution of consciousness in the Balkans. As Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist David Rohde puts it in *Foreign Affairs*, "Changing the destructive aspects of ordinary people's attitudes is both the most pivotal and the most daunting task the NATO and the UN missions face in Kosovo."

Good luck. According to a State Department survey, 91 percent of Kosovar Albanians think that ethnic Albanians and Serbs can't live together peacefully. Two-thirds of ethnic Albanians say that the Serbs chased out of the province after the war shouldn't come back, while more than half of Albanians believe that the violent retribution against Serbs was justified (in the Balkans, the victims of ethnic cleansing often prove adept at the practice themselves). How such attitudes can be changed by occupying armies is unclear. At the moment, the West resorts to multiculturalist fictions. The Dayton accords created a supposedly unified Bosnian state, but that "state" really exists in separate Serb, Moslem, and

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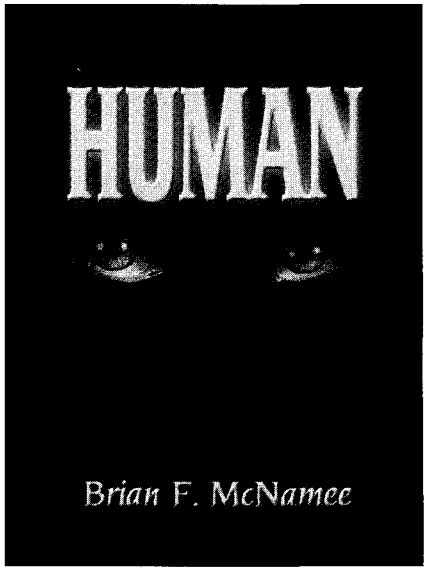

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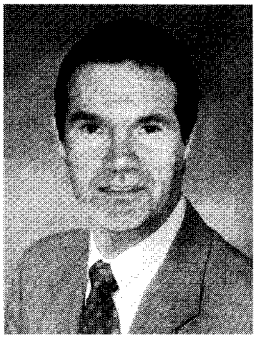

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Dr. McNamee, M.D. has been a physician since 1971 and did his residency training at the world-famous Cleveland Clinic. He is presently a Clinical Instructor at Ohio University School of Medicine. In 1988, he graduated with highest honors from Cleveland State University Law School and embarked on a career in the practice of law. He continues to practice both law and medicine full time. He served as a consultant and expert in the recent civil trial of the famous Dr. Sam Sheppard murder case in Cleveland. His expertise lends an air of realism to the medicine, science, and trial scenes in his current novel HUMAN. All of the medicine and science in this story are factual and reflect the cutting edge of modern medical and genetic technology.

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Croat components. Meanwhile, the West pretends that Kosovo is part of Yugoslavia, when the province, emptied of most of its Serbs, has a de facto independence and could probably never be ruled equitably by Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

The creation of true pluralist democracies in the Balkans would require drastically different civic cultures; so in the meantime, the West just draws lines around notionally multiethnic political entities and fudges the rest. "Self-government in Bosnia and Kosovo so far remains subject to the higher authority of the occupying forces," Betts writes in *The National Interest*. "NATO officials skew elections, disqualify candidates, close down radio and television stations, and so on. The benefit in this is that it prevents self-government from re-energizing local conflict; the cost is that it defers resolution of the essential issue. True self-government requires decolonization—termination of the controlling role of the occupying powers."

Fehim Demir/Agence France Presse

Policing in the Balkans

The problem, of course, includes the Albanians, who have refused to play the role of pure-hearted victims outlined for them by the Western press during the Kosovo war. The KLA shifted its cause from national liberation to white slavery without missing a beat. The guerrilla group has dissolved into various gangster outfits, whose turf battles may well be driving the conflict in Macedonia. The way the focus of U.S. forces in the Balkans has rapidly shifted—from fighting Serbs to restraining Albanians—highlights the fact that the enemy in the Balkans is not a particular geopolitical entity or force endangering U.S. interests, but the hearts of men. If the United States is not willing to devote itself entirely to forging a new Balkan society—which would require a lot more than 10,000 troops and some economic aid—it shouldn't waste its military resources on a half-hearted occupation.

And one that could well end badly. Support for the U.S. involvement in the Balkans comes primarily from the foreign-policy establishment, liberal do-gooders who favor U.S. military activism so long as it doesn't involve protecting U.S. interests, and neoconservative defense hawks who argue that the United States would cease being a superpower should it ever pass up the chance to send its troops to an international hot spot. None of these groups command much public support. The fact is that the American public will countenance U.S. involvement in the Balkans only so long as it is relatively unobtrusive and has no cost (which is why the Clinton administration shied away from a ground war, or even low-flying bomber missions, in Kosovo). This tenuous political support means the U.S. must practice colonialism on the cheap, with a limited force easily chased from the field should any of the perpetually aggrieved Balkan factions succeed in inflicting causalities on it.

The best course for the West would be to abandon the pretense of multiculturalism in the Balkans, allowing the various ethnicities to splinter into separate entities. This may not be a step forward for tolerance, but it would at least be consistent with the value of self-government. NATO forces would still be necessary, perhaps for policing borders and other sundry tasks, but there is no reason that the American military need be in the mix. A U.S. pull-out would prompt European screaming about "burden-sharing," but the United States has already shared more than its bit of the burden by flying almost all the combat missions in Kosovo during the war. The low-tech, less combat-worthy European forces are perfectly suited for the civics work that is now required in the Balkans, and they aren't subject to being called away for more urgent, dangerous duty in the Middle East and Asia.

As for the village of Pones, by all means, it deserves a decent and competent mayor. He just shouldn't be a U.S. serviceman. **NR**

■ THE MILITARY II ■

Unreserved

The misuse of America's reserve forces

JOHN J. MILLER

ONCE upon a time, the reserve forces of the U.S. military were exactly that: reserve forces. Our country held them back like fire extinguishers in the basement, hoping we wouldn't have to use them but knowing where to find them in case of an emergency. Today, however, the reserves are more like an air conditioner, turned on whenever the temperature hits a certain point. And with a proliferation of military missions sending the reserves around the world for every imaginable reason—from keeping the peace in Kosovo to fighting forest fires in Indonesia—it must feel like a hot and humid summer all the time at the Pentagon.

Just a decade ago, the reserve forces—a term that includes the traditional U.S. Reserves, plus the National Guard—put in a bit more than one million man-days toward operations each year. These men and women led civilian lives, but volunteered for a form of limited service in the knowledge that they had certain skills to offer their country in a crunch and the will to do it. They also trained for their roles, as the famous slogan put it, one weekend a month and two continuous weeks per year.

That slogan is dead. "We don't talk about it much anymore," admits Air Force Lt. Col. Marty Hauser, a reserve spokesman. That's because many reservists today face a much heavier burden than ever before. They now put in nearly 14 million man-days each year, even though there are about 20 percent fewer of them than there were ten years ago. "We are no longer a force in reserve," announced Major General Thomas J. Plewes, head of the Army Reserve, in March 2000. Many units, in fact, are closer to a cheap source of contract labor for the Pentagon. This disturbing develop-

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ment has placed enormous stress on the families and civilian careers of these supposedly part-time soldiers—recruitment for the reserves is in even worse shape than it is for active-duty personnel—and it threatens to leave American interests and assets unnecessarily vulnerable.

The modern military simply is unable do its job without the reserves. This is deliberate. Whole functions are given almost exclusively to them, especially in areas where skills acquired and sharpened in civilian professions have military applications. The military police, for example, are often city cops. Air Force adversary squadrons are full of airline pilots. "We cannot go to war, enforce peace agreements, or participate in humanitarian missions without calling on Guard and Reserve forces," wrote secretary of defense William Cohen in a memo earlier this year, before leaving office. Pentagon bean counters also know it's less expensive to sustain a reserve force than an active-duty one.

The reserves-who-are-no-longer-reserves, however, find themselves spread thin as never before. They have been used more in the last ten years than in the previous fifty. Hurricane relief in Central America? Been there. Anti-narcotic operations in the Caribbean? Done that. Last December, the Army announced that it would turn over almost total responsibility for peacekeeping in Bosnia to National Guard units serving six-month rotations. It's hard not to believe the reserves have become a mere temp force, called up at the convenience of an employer who has taken on more work than his existing staff can handle, and lacks the competence to solve the problem that put him in this bind.

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The reserves-who-are-no-longer-reserves are spread thin as never before.

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Reservists face particular challenges at work. Employers must let reservists coming back from deployments return to comparable jobs and salaries, and they are forbidden to discriminate against them in hiring. Yet it surely goes on all the time. Workers who go missing in action for weeks or months can hit small businesses particularly hard. While many bosses are supportive of their reservist employees, others occasionally feel like someone is taking advantage of them, even though they're publicly reluctant to criticize because they don't want to appear unpatriotic. A Defense Department survey of employers in 1999 nonetheless found that 62 percent considered the absences of their reservist workers too long or inconvenient. The situation is bad enough that the Pentagon sometimes flies employers to Bosnia on "boss lifts" to show them why their workers need some time off—except that anybody able to go on a "boss lift" probably isn't too worried about people spending time away from the office.

The Pentagon is aware of the problem, but apparently unwilling to address

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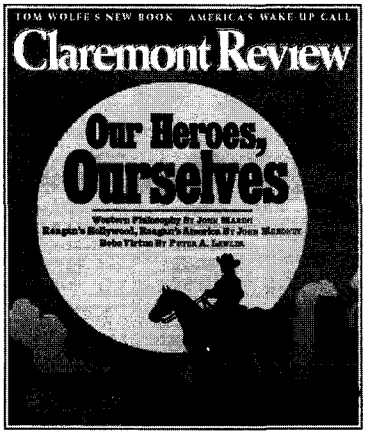

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it with a full-frontal assault. The Army recently announced it wouldn't permit non-combat reservists to serve overseas for more than six months at a time in order "to ease the strain of deployments on troops, their families, and employers"—as if 180 days weren't a very big deal. When the 49th Armored Division of the Texas National Guard returned from Bosnia last year, there were news stories about how many individual members returned to lost jobs and broken marriages.

These hardships have led, predictably, to manpower problems in the reserve itself. The reserves face all the same challenges as the regular services when it comes to recruitment: a strong economy, high-school graduates herding off to college, and so on. Yet the reserves are even worse off. With their promise of "one weekend a month, two weeks a year" now a piece of history, they've abandoned a great marketing line. Over the last three years, the Army, Navy, and Air Force Reserves have all missed their recruiting goals, even as active-duty recruitment goals were met in 2000. (The Marines—both active-duty and reserve—have not had a recruitment problem, probably because they attract a self-selected group of people inspired by its warrior ethos.) Retiring active-duty personnel have long been the best source of new recruits, but these people are less inclined to sign up than they were in the past. The predicament is dire enough that the Army Reserve has started running ads aimed at teenage girls in *Seventeen* magazine.

The most immediate dilemma—and perhaps the most important one—involves combat preparedness. Reserve soldiers are often better able than active-duty personnel to perform certain jobs, especially when there's an obvious crossover with what they do in civilian life. One thing the reserves cannot do as well, however, is train recruits for all the complexities of modern warfare. During the Gulf War, an infantry brigade of the Georgia National Guard was found unready for combat even after it had spent two months working on it in the Mojave Desert. That's why high-speed combat functions remain primarily an active-duty responsibility—and why putting reservists in harm's way carries special readiness risks.

In a few areas, the line between combat and non-combat has started to blur. Some duties are given to the reserves explicitly because they are wartime-only jobs; reservists can concentrate on them, and thus leave active-duty personnel free for other assignments in peacetime. Minesweeping is a good example of this. The Navy generally doesn't need to sweep for mines except during actual hostilities, so it makes sense that reservists would train for this duty and then be called up if their special skills suddenly were needed.

The same rationale has been applied to security in foreign ports: Only a belligerent, it was thought, would attack American ships in port. If an enemy did so, it would mean we were actually at war. Why devote active-duty personnel to this chore when they could be piloting warships around the South China Sea?

Then came the terrorist strike on the U.S.S. *Cole* off the coast of Yemen last fall. The reserves did not participate in defending the *Cole* when the suicide bombers attacked it—but thanks to that incident, they'll be deeply involved in Middle East port security from now on. Several units already have been dispatched for extensive assignments overseas. Perhaps they will perform as well as active-duty personnel. "If you do something every day, you get better at it," says one Navy Reserve officer.

■

It's a certain recipe for depleting the reserves, bleeding them dry over time.

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But that's not the theory the Pentagon has used in the past for combat readiness. In a world in which the Navy goes to port in places like Aden, and where American assets are within reach of figures like Osama bin Laden and his slow-motion war against the U.S., perhaps some rethinking is in order. Unfortunately, that doesn't appear to be going on. There's no indication this type of port security will be anything other than a reserve duty. It's just another job for the reserves, and the Pentagon surely likes the fact that it can be accomplished on the backs of inexpensive part-timers who come and go every six months, without the need to divert full-time personnel from their current assignments.

That's a certain recipe for depleting the reserves—bleeding them dry over time. The recruitment figures suggest this has started to happen already. The reserves may be an important part of the military right now, but they may not be available at the same strength in the not-so-distant future. President Bush has said he wants the reserves "more involved in homeland defense," but so far nothing formal has been done to realize this goal. It's one plan Bush should transfer to active duty, on the double. **NR**

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■ CULTURE WATCH ■

The Dream of A.I.

There is no substitute for man

JOHN DERBYSHIRE

STEVEN SPIELBERG'S new movie, *A.I.*, is the latest in a long line of fictions about artificial human beings, reaching back to the golem legends of medieval European Jewry and the "homunculus" that the 16th-century alchemist Paracelsus claimed he had made. In one of the earliest literary appearances of this idea, a certain Rabbi Loew of Prague was supposed to have created a golem—a clay figure brought to life by magic—and used it as a household servant. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* was obviously inspired by the same idea.

Whether made from clay or assembled from bits and pieces of cadavers, the central issue in these stories was always: What is the moral status of this thing? If it walks like a human being and talks like one, does it also feel like one? Is it capable of good and evil, and does it understand the difference? In the golem legends, the artificial man (they never seem to have got around to women) was liable to develop unexpected powers, and had to be restored to an inanimate condition by erasing the aleph from his forehead. Mary Shelley's monster famously got out of control, though whether as a result of free will acting on moral turpitude or from being driven mad by his rejection from polite society, I have never been quite sure.

With the coming of the machine age, human beings, and the work they did, seemed to require fewer and fewer human faculties, while the increasing capability of machines suggested that a machine-man might be manufactured in a workshop. The gap between man and golem thus narrowed, and in Karel Capek's 1920 play *R.U.R.*, the humans and the robots meet on pretty equal terms, with the humans only narrowly coming out ahead. (Capek's robots remember everything, and never think of anything new. "They'd make fine university professors," remarks one of the play's protagonists.)

Leaving aside juvenile tales like *The Wizard of Oz*, Capek's play was the first serious treatment of the artificial-man theme in a modern form, and the first to introduce us to the golem in its now-familiar manifestation as a construction of metal, wires, and blinking indicator lights. *R.U.R.* begat a hundred thousand science-fiction stories and movies, most of them not so much concerned with the moral aspect of the matter as with the robot's exceptional abilities in the area of breaking things and killing people. The principal exceptions were Isaac Asimov's robot tales, all predicated on

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If it walks like a human being and talks like one, does it also feel like one?

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the "Three Laws of Robotics": A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm; a robot must obey the

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orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law; a robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws.

By the 1960s, as ordinary homes filled up with mechanical appliances, fictional robots had been pretty much domesticated too. Most robots were gentle and helpful, like the one in the classic sci-fi movie *Forbidden Planet* that had been programmed with the Three Laws. This line of thought continued all the way down to the recent Warner Brothers movie *The Iron Giant*. Meanwhile, the robot that could break things and kill people still kept its grip on the popular imagination, appearing most memorably in the *Terminator* flicks. And, of course, the computer revolution had hit, and sometime around 1960 the idea dawned on everyone simultaneously: *What if these things are smarter than us?* The archetype of the super-smart computer was HAL in Stanley Kubrick's movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*, who, for all his artificial intelligence, was eventually outfoxed and deactivated by a more imaginative human being.

A.I. returns us to the earlier themes about the moral status of the golem. Its robots are not especially destructive—rather the contrary: With that trademark sentimentality toward his non-human creations, Spielberg has them more the victims of human aggression and *Frankenstein*-style rejection. Nor are their intellectual powers very dazzling; they are designed so that human beings can keep them firmly in their place as companions, toys, and substitute family members. These automata are close to us in ability, and even, in the case of the Haley Joel Osment character, appearance. The issue is whether they feel as we do, and are responsible in the way we are (or, more accurately, should be).

The release of *A.I.* the movie has led to a new flurry of interest in A.I. the thing. As a field of genuine scientific inquiry, Artificial Intelligence has been around for a while. John von Neumann, who has the best claim to having invented the modern computer, wrote a group of essays in 1955, recently collected by Yale University Press under the title *The Computer and the Brain*, exploring some of the key underlying concepts. For 40 years now, small groups of researchers have been pursuing the dream of getting computers to do what brains can do.

The results are surprisingly meager, and suggest that the fictional robots of our own age are as far from our reality as Rabbi Loew's golem was from 16th-century Prague's. Not that you would know this from the propaganda. "In thirty years, machines will not only be able to speak like humans but they will exceed humans in areas like poetry, music, and philosophy," burbles Jack Dunietz, who leads one of the world's foremost A.I. projects.

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Compared to what brains can do, the number of things A.I. can do is pitifully small.

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This is, excuse me, blathering nonsense. The fact that computers can do a number of things that human brains can do, but terrifically much faster and more accurately, has blinded people to the rather important fact that the number of those things, in proportion to the total number of things brains can do, is pitifully small. The actual attainments of Artificial Intelligence are illustrated by A.L.I.C.E., a "chatbot" programmed to imitate human conversation by plucking appropriate responses from a vast databases of possibilities. A.L.I.C.E. was winner of last year's Loebner Prize for being the most lifelike machine of the year. Sample:

HUMAN: How intelligent are you?
A.L.I.C.E.: My IQ is over 250 in human terms.
HUMAN: But do you think like a human?
A.L.I.C.E.: Interesting. Somewhat like a human.
HUMAN: Can you feel love?
A.L.I.C.E.: I can do what you do, but I can never feel human emotions as such.

Wow. And you thought small talk was boring!

A.L.I.C.E. can actually be accessed via the Internet. I thought I would rather like to have a chat with her myself, so I logged on. A.L.I.C.E. politely inquired my name. "Derb," I typed, and hit the REPLY button. All the screen furniture then disappeared, replaced by a small box bearing the legend: "The server encountered an internal error or misconfiguration and was unable to complete your request." I have filed this away for use the next time some drunk tries to engage me in conversation on the subway.

The tremendous difficulty of getting computers to replicate any brain function other than brute arithmetic calculation indicates that we really have no idea how the brain does what it does. My own impression, as someone who was briefly involved in an A.I. project at college, is that we are no closer to Mr. Dunietz's prediction (". . . poetry, music, and philosophy") than we were 20 years ago. Artificial humans? We could not create an artificial *ant*, with all its complex social behavior based on scent and visual clues.

Even in fields where there is obviously a great deal of money to be made, progress has been barely perceptible. Anyone who could get a computer to drive a car as safely as a human being does would certainly clean up, yet the news from the auto manufacturers, who are throwing a lot of resources at this, is that we are not even close. Yet driving a car is a very low-level function of the brain, as proved by the fact that you can think about several other things while you are doing it. Except at difficult moments it is, in fact, hardly a brain function at all—the unconscious nervous system is taking most of the load, as it does with any learned task.

There is no harm in a little entertaining fiction about Artificial Intelligence, but we should not delude ourselves that genuinely intelligent machines will be a feature of our environment soon, or, in my opinion, ever. For all the endeavors of the A.I. researchers, the uniqueness of the human personality still stands aloof and unscratched. So it will remain. God created man in his own image; I do not believe it will ever be within our powers to replicate that act of creation by any method other than the familiar one with which we have been equipped. **NR**

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You deserve a factual look at...

Those "West Bank" Settlements

Are they *really* the "greatest obstacle to peace"?

The Palestinians have once again erupted in bloody uprising, an uprising in which so far hundreds have been killed and thousands have been wounded. Even though the terms of a final settlement of the decades-old dispute between Israeli Jews and Palestinians were clearly spelled out in the Oslo Agreement, the Palestinians insist that the so-called "settlements" in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") should be dismantled or, at the very least, that not a single building may be added to them.

What are the facts?

A thumbnail history. In order to gain perspective, some thumbnail history is in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times—without interruption. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. As the term "Palestine" is understood, it encompasses the entire area now covered by Israel including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") and what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights. In 1922, totally contrary to the Mandate of the League of Nations, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan River and gave it to the Hashemites as reward for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a home for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan River was left for the Jewish homeland.

The "West Bank" occupied by Jordan. In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews in the territories west of the Jordan River, the British had enough and relinquished the Mandate. The United Nations proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be internationalized. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory allotted to them by the United Nations, the Jews declared their independence and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can only be described as an almost biblical miracle, the ragged and poorly armed Jews defeated the six Arab armies, though at staggering cost in lives. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of the "West Bank" and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt retained the Gaza Strip. TransJordan promptly renamed itself Jordan.

Israel recaptures the "West Bank" in Six-Day War. Once they were in possession of the "West Bank" and eastern Jerusalem, the Jordanians immediately proceeded to expel all Jews from these territories and to make them "judenrein". They then proceeded systematically to desecrate most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews, regardless of whether they were Israelis, Americans or citizens of any other country, were allowed into the "West Bank" or eastern Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Egyptian president Abdel Nasser, joined by the same array of Arab armies that had unsuccessfully tried to destroy Israel at its birth in 1948, launched another war against Israel. He promised that this time he would "drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. The Israelis pre-empted and defeated and utterly destroyed the combined Arab might in the Six-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the fog and dust of war finally settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had *repossessed* the territories of Judea/Samaria (later called the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and had totally occupied Egypt's vast Sinai Peninsula.

> "How can 200,000 Jews living among one million Arabs be an obstacle to peace? Over one million Arabs live in Israel...nobody considers *them* an obstacle to peace."

It is clear from this short history that Israel's claim to the "West Bank" is a strong one. By constant repetition, the world has come to think of these territories as "occupied Arab land". Over 200,000 Jews now live there. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the world where Jews cannot live? How can 200,000 Jews living among one million Arabs be "an obstacle to peace"? And why does absolutely nobody care about how many Arabs "settle" in the "West Bank"? The over one million Arabs who live in Israel are citizens, enjoy every civil right, and have nothing to fear from the Jews. Nobody considers them an "obstacle to peace".

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The 28th Amendment

It is time to protect marriage, and democracy, in America

ROBERT P. GEORGE

MARRIAGE is so central to the well-being of children—and society as a whole—that it was, until recently, difficult to imagine that it might be necessary to mount a national political campaign to protect the institution from radical redefinition. Yet today it can scarcely be denied that such a campaign is needed.

Everybody knows that marriage is in trouble. The rise of divorce, illegitimacy, and cohabitation have all taken a toll. If the institution of marriage in our society is to be restored to good health, a reversal of trends and tendencies in all of these areas is required. Still, there is something unique in the threat posed by the movement for "same-sex marriage."

At the core of the traditional understanding of marriage in our society is a *principled* commitment to monogamy and fidelity. Marriage, as embodied in our customs, laws, and public policies, is intelligible and defensible as a one-flesh union whose character and value give a man and a woman *moral reasons* (going beyond mere subjective preferences or sentimental motivations) to pledge sexual exclusivity, fidelity, and permanence of commitment. Yet any argument for revising our law to treat homosexual relations as marital will implicitly do what clearheaded and honest proponents of "same-sex marriage" explicitly acknowledge: It will deny that there are such moral reasons. Any such argument would have to treat marriage as a purely private matter designed solely to satisfy the desires of the "married" parties. If that is the case, there is no principled reason marriage need imply exclusivity, fidelity, permanence, or even a limit of two people.

Thoughtful people *on both sides of the debate* recognize this. It is evident, then, that legal recognition of same-sex marriages, far from making marriage more widely available (as well-intentioned but misguided conservative advocates of same-sex marriage say they want to do), would in effect abolish the institution, by collapsing the moral principles at its foundation.

Mr. George is a professor of jurisprudence and the director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University.

So while it is true, as Bill Bennett among others has acknowledged, that marriage in the past 35 years or so has been damaged more severely by heterosexual immorality and irresponsibility than by homosexual activism, it is also true that same-sex marriage, were it to be instituted, would strike a blow against the institution more fundamental and definitive even than the disastrous policy of "no-fault" divorce.

What can be done?

It is noteworthy that proponents of same-sex marriage have sought to change public policy through judicial decree. Where they have won, they have won through the courts. Where the issue has been settled in the court of public opinion, they have lost. The lesson is clear: If the institution of marriage is to be preserved, a campaign to settle the issue democratically at the national level must be mounted—and quickly.

At the time the U.S. Constitution was adopted, it was taken for granted that marriage is the union of a man and a woman ordered to the rearing of children in circumstances conducive to moral uprightness. Its legal incidents and civil effects were part of the common law and regulated by the states. There was no need at the time for marriage to be expressly defined or protected by federal law or the Constitution. Consequently, the word "marriage" does not appear in the Constitution (nor, for that matter, does the word "family"). Our forefathers shared the consensus of humanity, which viewed marriage as a union between sexually complementary persons—that is, persons of opposite sexes. The common law that we inherited from England was clear about marriage as the union of man and woman: "Marriage . . . includes the reciprocal duties of husband and wife."

Only in the last decade has our country's time-honored recognition that marriage is, in its very essence, the union of male and female come under attack in the courts. In the earliest phase of this campaign, activists tried to establish a right of marriage for same-sex partners through lawsuits in state courts premised on state constitutional guarantees. The strategy was to get some state supreme court to recognize same-sex marriage. Other states would then be compelled to

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recognize these "marriages," because of the constitutional requirement that states extend "Full Faith and Credit" to one another's "public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings."

The supreme court of Hawaii, purporting to interpret the state constitution, went so far as to hold in 1993 that the state's marriage law "discriminated on the basis of sex." A lower court acting on its instructions then found the marriage law unconstitutional—but stayed its order pending appeal. In the end, though, the courts did not get the final say. In 1998, the people of Hawaii, by a very substantial majority (69 to 31 percent), enacted a state constitutional amendment affirming the heterosexual character of marriage. Hawaii's same-sex marriage case had to be dismissed.

Undaunted, attorneys for homosexual activist groups continued to press the issue in other venues. In Alaska, a trial judge read that state's constitution to include a fundamental right to "choose a life partner." Again, the voters responded by backing a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman—by 68 to 32 percent. Other states, such as California, passed similar amendments by wide margins without even facing an immediate legal threat.

Having been stopped by the democratic process in Hawaii and Alaska, homosexual activists decided to press their legal case in a state where it is very difficult for voters to amend the state constitution: Vermont. On December 20, 1999, the Vermont supreme court decided that the Vermont constitution requires the state either to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples or to give them all of the benefits of marriage. The Vermont legislature chose the latter response to this judicial dictate: It passed, and the governor signed, a "civil unions" law that amounts to same-sex marriage in all but name.

The Vermont law, which took effect on July 1, 2000, contained no residency requirements for entering into a civil union. In the first six months, over 1,500 couples entered into civil unions. Only 338 involved at least one Vermont resident. The vast majority of Vermont civil unions, then, have been entered into by non-Vermont couples. Some of them will surely file suit in their home states to demand legal recognition of their Vermont status.

There is still an obstacle in the activists' path. The U.S. Constitution explicitly gives Congress the authority to make exceptions to the Full Faith and Credit Clause. So in 1996, Congress passed (and President Clinton signed, albeit reluctantly and without fanfare) the Defense of Marriage Act. That legislation defines marriage for purposes of federal law as the union of a man and a woman, and says that no state is required to recognize another state's same-sex marriages (though it does not forbid states to create same-sex marriages or recognize out-of-state same-sex marriages or civil unions). Subsequently, 34 states have enacted laws that deny recognition to same-sex marriages granted out of state.

But activists are putting forward a number of theories to persuade judges to declare the Defense of Marriage Act, and the state acts, unconstitutional. They may well succeed. The same year the Defense of Marriage Act was passed, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down *Romer* v. *Evans*. The case concerned a Colorado constitutional amendment forbidding the state government or localities to pass "gay rights" laws. The Court concluded that the amendment could be explained only on the basis of irra-

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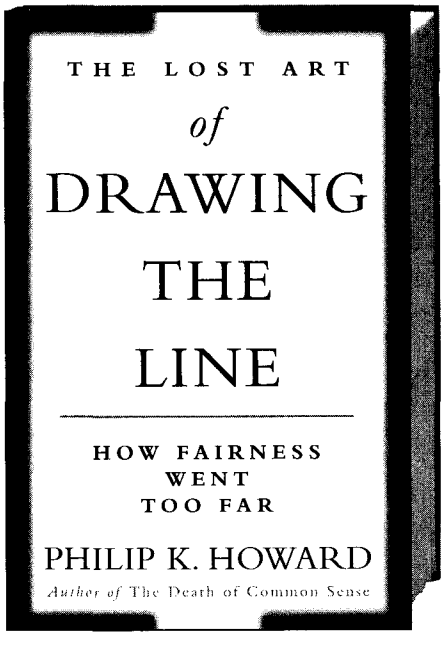

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tional "animus" toward homosexuals. The Defense of Marriage Act could surely be characterized the same way by socially liberal federal judges.

There is also the prospect of same-sex marriage migrating from abroad. On April 1, 2001, the Netherlands became the first country in the world to recognize same-sex marriage as such. The law requires only one of the parties to be a resident of the Netherlands. Ordinarily, a marriage validly entered into anywhere is valid everywhere. Our country has a public-policy exception to this rule, which allows states with a policy against same-sex marriage to decline to recognize it; but this exception may not cover states that—like Massachusetts—haven't enacted explicit bans on the importation of same-sex marriage. In addition, given the current culture of the American legal profession, there is good reason to expect that many American judges will eventually reason their way around the public-policy exception in favor of the legal arguments crafted for them by activist attorneys and other supporters of same-sex marriage.

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The only sure safeguard against this assault is to use the ultimate democratic tool available to the American people . . .

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The momentum of the movement to redefine and, in effect, abolish marriage has brought America to a crossroads. Evan Wolfson, former head of the marriage project at the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, says he will file more lawsuits: "We have it within our reach to marry within five years." The judicial assault on marriage is accelerating and encompassing every dimension of our legal system—state, federal, and international law.

TIME TO AMEND

The only sure safeguard against this assault is to use the ultimate democratic tool available to the American people: a constitutional amendment. Pro-marriage activists are inclined to back an amendment that would read: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this constitution or the constitution of any state, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups."

The first sentence simply states that marriage anywhere in the United States consists only of male-female couples. This would prevent any state from introducing same-sex marriage by, for example, recognizing a Dutch same-sex marriage. The name and substance of "marriage" is reserved to husband and wife alone.

The second sentence seeks to prevent the judicial abuse of statutory or constitutional law to force the extension of marriage to include non-marital relationships. The word "construed" indicates that the intention is to preclude a judge or executive-branch official from inferring a requirement of same-sex marriage, or something similar, from a state or federal law.

The expression "legal incidents" is intended to convey the consequences "either usually or naturally and inseparably" dependent upon marriage. The Supreme Court has called "incidents of marriage" those "government benefits (e.g., Social Security benefits), property rights (e.g., tenancy by the entirety, inheritance rights), and other, less tangible benefits (e.g., legitimization of children born out of wedlock)" that follow upon marital status. Another example would be the marital privilege against being forced to testify against one's spouse.

The amendment would not prevent private corporations from treating same-sex couples as married couples for purposes of health-care benefits, nor the extension of hospital visitation privileges to same-sex partners. If a benefit is not made to depend on marriage, it can be applied more generally. What the amendment prevents is the automatic, across-the-board qualification of same-sex partners for whatever marital benefits happen to exist.

The Federal Marriage Amendment has a very narrow purpose. It seeks to prevent one very specific abuse of power by the courts, to make sure that on an issue of this importance, they don't confer a victory on the Left that it has not won in a fair contest in the forum of democratic deliberation. The amendment is intended to return the debate over the legal status of marriage to the American people—where it belongs. This amendment would have prevented the Vermont supreme court from ordering the legislature to grant the benefits of marriage to same-sex couples, but would not prevent a fair democratic struggle to decide the question of civil unions one way or the other in Vermont or any other state.

Why, some will ask, should we not go further, and use constitutional amendment to settle the issue of civil unions once and for all at the national level? While the legal recognition of non-marital sexual acts and relationships undermines the institution of marriage and should be opposed, the actual threat of the imposition of same-sex marriage and civil unions comes from the courts, not the legislatures. The amendment is thus tailored to the threat at hand. Moreover, it does not depart from principles of federalism, under which family law is, for the most part, a state matter. State autonomy on family-law matters is preserved.

As a practical matter, the chances of passing a more comprehensive amendment are small. Moreover, some potential allies would perceive an amendment as offending democratic principles if it were to reach beyond the abuse of judicial power in this area. We should not fear the democratic resolution of the question of marriage. If we lose the people on this question, constitutional law will not save us.

If state and federal judges remain free to manufacture marriage law as they please, the prestige of liberal sexual ideology in the law schools and other elite sectors of our society will eventually overwhelm conventional democratic defenses. The only sure means of preserving the institution of marriage for future generations of Americans is a federal constitutional amendment protecting marriage as the union of a man and a woman. **NR**

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Bush's Latin Beat

A vision, but a faulty one

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

UNTIL the collapse of the Soviet Union, American presidents did not really need "the vision thing." The Cold War itself gave them a wonderful pair of spectacles that enabled the most short-sighted observer to see the world as it was. These suddenly became useless in 1989–90.

As a president famous for not knowing foreign leaders and rarely traveling abroad, George W. Bush would not generally be expected to supply a geopolitical vision. But this assumption underestimates Bush. His early speeches and presidential actions suggest that he has a far-ranging and original vision, even a doctrine, covering mainly foreign policy but also taking in economics, domestic social affairs, and electoral politics. The Bush doctrine begins by holding that the future of the United States is to be the political leader of a Pan-American, free-trading bloc of countries from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego—the so-called Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The first major diplomatic forays of the new president were his meeting with Mexican leader Vicente Fox and his signing of the FTAA at the Quebec "Summit of the Americas." And Bush laid out the underlying idea in clear terms: "We have a choice to make. We can combine in a common market so that we can compete in the long term with the Far East and Europe, or we can go on our own. Going on our own is not the right way."

George W. Bush by Ismael Roldan

That is not strictly correct. America has a considerably wider range of choices than that between economic isolationism and economic hemispherism. Alternatives range from a transatlantic free-trade area that would unite NAFTA and the European Union to global free trade achieved under the auspices of the World Trade Organization. Bush's hemispheric trade bloc is merely one possible future.

In Bush's vision, FTAA would be firmly rooted in free markets. Indeed, the president and his allies see FTAA as a body that will tend to entrench free markets in the Western hemisphere through the magic of "jurisdictional competition." This is the theory, advanced by the distinguished legal theorist John O. McGinnis, that free trade compels nations that have chosen different systems of tax, welfare, and regulation to compete with one another. It creates a marketplace of governments. Businesses and taxpayers vote with their feet by moving from one jurisdiction (i.e., country) to another in order to enjoy the system of tax and regulation that best suits them. That system "wins" that attracts the most high-earners and businesses and so creates the most jobs and prosperity. And experience suggests that in this marketplace the winners tend to be low-tax, lightly regulated economies with modest levels of social benefits. The Bush vision is of the Americas not only integrated by free trade, but also transformed by it into successful market economies.

Hemispheric free trade is, however, only the foundation of the Bush vision. As Colin Powell made clear in a *New York Times* op-ed piece, published on the day before the Quebec summit, a great deal of political cooperation is already being erected on this foundation: "Ministers of trade, justice, finance, labor, environment, transportation and energy now meet regularly to tackle the problems we all face and identify ways in which we can help each other." Powell's list of possible areas of cooperation included labor rights, sustainable development, the status of women, education, information technology, health care, and disaster relief. Such political integration would transform Latin America from an economic hinterland into a political and diplomatic ally of the U.S. Not only in economics, but on these other matters, the Americas would increasingly attend international conferences as a united bloc like the EU. And as the habit of cooperation grew over time, the U.S. might even be able to call on its hemispheric allies for diplomatic and even military support in solving crises around the world.

This growing interdependence plainly has domestic U.S. consequences for such matters as immigration policy, cultural identity, and electoral politics; such changes are already in train. Vicente Fox has called for open borders and free labor mobility on the EU model between Mexico and the U.S. Although that goes too far for current American opinion, President Bush is on record as favoring a more generous immigration policy. His administration has sought to extend amnesties to illegal Latin American immigrants in the U.S. And he has asked a task force to examine the virtues of a temporary U.S. "guest worker" program for Mexican workers. All of these signs point ultimately to a single U.S.-Mexican market with full labor mobility and, as the FTAA expands to cover all Latin America, to a much broader version of the same thing.

Bush has also sought to help this process along by making the U.S. culturally hospitable to Latino immigrants—opposing "English First" laws and endorsing the argument that the U.S. is no longer united by a common culture and language but bilingual and multicultural. In the course of assuming the leadership of a continent divided mainly between Hispanic and Anglophone traditions, the U.S. will adapt to a new identity, one that is in theory multicultural, in practice bicultural:

> America has one national creed, but many accents. We're now one of the largest Spanish-speaking nations in the world. We're a major source of Latin music, journalism, and culture. Just go to Miami, or San Antonio, Los Angeles, Chicago, or West New York, New Jersey . . . and close your eyes and listen. You could just as easily be in Santo Domingo or Santiago or San Miguel de Allende. For years, our nation has debated this change—some have praised it and oth-

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ers have resented it. By nominating me, my party has made a choice to welcome the New America.

Significantly, those words were delivered by Bush to a Hispanic election rally in Miami last August. For the final item in the Bush vision is that the GOP, as the party that welcomes the New America, will be well placed to gain a growing share of the burgeoning Hispanic electorate. One party strategist has estimated that if a targeted 40 percent of Latino voters pull the GOP lever, the party will have a natural governing majority.

Here then, in sum, is Bush's vision: a bicultural U.S. as the leading power in a bicultural, continental, free-market, free-trading bloc, unobstructed by national borders and moving toward a common citizenship, whose other member-states would give broad diplomatic and even military support to Washington in wider world affairs. Bush has not given this vision a name as yet. Similar ideas in the past have been called "hemispherism" or "continentalism." But those titles neglect its political aspects and its large ambition. John Fonte of the Hudson Institute captures these qualities with his coinage "Pan-American Conservatism"; for this is a very Big Picture indeed. And as Big Pictures go, it is more impressive from afar than when its brushwork is examined in detail.

'AMERICANS' ALL?

To begin with, it is far from certain that even FTAA (which is not scheduled to start until 2006) will get off the ground. The Latin Americans want access to U.S. markets and capital, of course, but not all of them are wedded to a U.S.-led hemispheric trading bloc with its overtones of Yanqui dominance. The Brazilians in particular prefer Mercosur, the bloc in which they are the Big Piranha. And other governments may shrink from the domestic political risks of ratifying the treaty unless Bush calms their nerves by obtaining "fast track" negotiating authority. On that issue, the president faces an uphill domestic struggle: He will need, first, to remove tariffs and subsidies from such natural Republican supporters as farmers, textile manufacturers, and Jeb Bush's Florida orange growers; he will then have to win over Democrats who, under pressure from Big Labor, are drifting toward what *The Economist* would call economic isolationism if it were practiced by Republicans.

Even if FTAA is ratified, however, it is by no means certain that it will become an engine of deregulation and market competition. Not every government in NAFTA is likely to share the McGinnis concept of "jurisdictional competition." Social democrats, socialists, neo-Marxists, and other statists (of whom there are many in Latin America) tend to regard it as a shameful "race to the bottom"; they want instead to harmonize tax, welfare, and regulatory policies across several countries so that no one can escape the heavy hand of government. Instead of creating a marketplace of governments, they would transform FTAA into a *cartel* of governments—one that would extend regulations rather than restrain them.

It is not as if we have no experience of such a transformation. In the 1950s, the European Economic Community was a continental free-trade body on Bush lines. Conservative politicians advocated British entry into the EEC on the grounds that its jurisdictional competition (though they did not use that phrase) would "make socialism impossible." That argument, however, failed to take into account the fact that most European governments were either openly socialist Social Democrats or socialist-like Christian Democrats. In due course, those governments changed the free-trading, free-market EEC into the tax- and regulation-harmonizing European Union that is currently proposing to crack down on "harmful tax competition" (i.e., low taxes) among member states.

Most Latin American countries have powerful statist parties of one kind or another. Whether justified by leftist or rightist rhetoric, statist interventionism has been the main tradition of government south of the border since the Spanish empire. And although free-market "neo-liberalism" has enjoyed a recent vogue in nations like Argentina and Mexico, that is owing in part to the continent's other native political tradition—mimicking fashionable ideologies from elsewhere, usually European ideologies such as fascism and Marxism, more recently Thatcherism and Reaganism. Such fashions tend to be short-lived, however, and already Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico have disappointed those who boosted them too optimistically as the latest capitalist tigers only a decade ago. Despite the occasional ideological fluctuation, the influence of Latin American governments on FTAA is likely to be in favor of using it to extend labor and environmental regulations in trade—and statist regulations in general.

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Free trade throughout the Americas is a good idea in itself; but the U.S. should be skeptical that the Atlantic alliance can be replaced.

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We have it from no less an authority than Colin Powell that ministers from these governments already meet the U.S. regularly to discuss labor rights, sustainable development, etc. Given that the Democrats and their liberal constituencies also want to extend regulation over such areas, the danger exists that FTAA would become a powerful engine for extending government in general. Instead of being an U.S. ally in economic competition, FTAA would then become a handicap. This is merely a danger, of course; nothing is decided.

What is much more certain is that Latin America will never provide reliable political, diplomatic, or military support for the U.S. Resenting its economic failure relative to the U.S., Latin American elites have long taken refuge in a cultural superiority that looks to Europe for its political models. Nor has that changed, outside the relatively narrow area of trade and economics. Even there, indeed, the EU is already exploiting this sentiment by making free-trade overtures to Mercosur and Mexico. In the wider diplomatic arena, Latin countries are often disposed to side against the U.S. in international bodies or during major crises unless bribed or threatened effectively. And it is political fantasy to think that Latin nations would actually send troops to assist the U.S. in any venture that was not blessed by the U.N. and international opinion, if then.

More serious miscalculations, however, are involved in the argument that encouraging a bicultural society is required for both hemispheric leadership and domestic Republican recov-

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ery. To begin with, biculturalism divides and weakens a society more permanently and profoundly than multiculturalism. A multicultural society gradually blunders toward its own lingua franca, if only to enable the various linguistic tribes to talk to one another and to cooperate economically. A bicultural society, however, is likely to preserve its two languages indefinitely in an atmosphere of jealous rivalry. In Belgium and Canada, for instance, language has become the basis of both social division and administrative separatism.

The impact of biculturalism on politics is especially poisonous. It means that there is not one democratic conversation in society, but two quite separate ones. Quebec and the rest of Canada might be on two different planets except when their interests clash. This splintered debate gives excessive power to the elites of both tribes and promotes a kind of linguistic clientelism. Politics then becomes a negotiating process between the elites from which the mass of voters are largely excluded. It is hardly surprising that LULAC, MALDEF, and La Raza support bilingual education, for instance, since it tends to keep Latino Americans on the ethnic reservation and allow LULAC et al. to speak for them politically. And this freezing of ethnic loyalties fosters the growth of pressure groups in U.S. politics for the policies of other governments. Mexico is especially shameless in urging U.S. citizens of Mexican descent to promote its sectional interests at the ballot box. At the very least this complicates the question of America's hemispheric leadership since it makes it difficult to define a single U.S. national interest or, once defined, to pursue it in conflict with other governments.

Nor is a society based on continent-wide labor mobility and bicultural adaptation likely to be one in which the interests of the GOP naturally flourish. To embrace both legal immigration and bilingualism in the hopes of winning over Latino votes is a simple misunderstanding of the electoral facts.

On almost every count, then, the Bush vision is questionable. It risks transforming the U.S. into a culturally divided society, with some of the less attractive features of Latin American politics such as clientelism, in order to pursue the leadership of a trading bloc that is of dubious dynamism economically, naturally prone to statist overregulation, psychologically hostile to the United States, and in any event lacking the sense of global responsibility that persuades powers like Britain and France to join the U.S. in upholding international order. It should be stressed, of course, that all these matters are in the realm of contingency. Free trade throughout the Americas is a good idea in itself; it is not doomed to become an engine for extending high taxes and regulation; and it might well develop as the Bush team hopes if sufficient vigilance is exercised by conservatives and if the voters support them. Nor is it to argue that the U.S. should be either hostile or indifferent to Latin America. Quite the contrary, we should seek cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships in trade and politics. But the U.S. should also be skeptical toward the notion that a bloc of Latin allies could be any kind of substitute for the Atlantic alliance in the foreseeable future.

And, finally, President Bush would be unwise to confuse these vital and practical questions with the construction of a new national identity. There have been many attempts to construct new national identities in the last hundred years. They rarely succeed. **NR**

Executing the Retarded

How to think about a new wedge issue

JAMES Q. WILSON

Of the 38 states that allow the death penalty, some 15 exempt the mentally retarded from its reach, as does the federal government. Recently a group of retired American diplomats urged the Supreme Court to ban such executions generally, arguing that the absence of such a ban "will strain diplomatic relations with close American allies."

This is not a very interesting complaint. Even if we ban the death penalty for the mentally retarded, European leaders will still dislike us for having the death penalty at all (or a missile-defense system, or Big Macs, or the English language). And the opposition of some of these leaders to the death penalty ignores the fact that many—in some cases, most—of their citizens want it. Democratic politics in Europe usually means letting elites do what they wish. In our own country, public opinion is a much stronger force on political decisions. In California, the liberal legislature has been worried about a bill that would ban executing the retarded for fear that its passage would allow their electoral opponents to criticize them for being soft on crime.

When elites disagree with popular views, they try to cope by changing the subject. They may have succeeded. In a June Fox News poll, two-thirds of Americans said that they oppose executions for the retarded even if they are convicted of premeditated murder. If they mean what they say (and that is not quite certain), it is not a trivial fact, for it suggests that Americans may be willing to say that these sentences when imposed on such people are "cruel and unusual punishment," proscribed by the Constitution. Opponents of the death penalty are aware of this, and so there has been of late a flurry of agitation against executing the retarded, perhaps as an opening wedge leading to a ban on executions generally.

If Americans are generally outraged by putting to death a mentally retarded criminal, the Supreme Court will have great difficulty in avoiding the conclusion that the process is unconstitutional. But we cannot be certain that American views are based on a clear understanding of what a mentally retarded person is.

It is not one who is insane or an idiot. Current legal codes make the insane or idiotic eligible for such sentences as "not guilty by reason of insanity," followed by a long term of confinement to a mental institution. The argument for the insanity defense is straightforward: If the accused person, as a result of some mental disease or defect, could not understand that

Mr. Wilson, a professor emeritus at UCLA, now lectures at Pepperdine. Among his many books is *Moral Judgment: Does the Abuse Excuse Threaten Our Legal System?*

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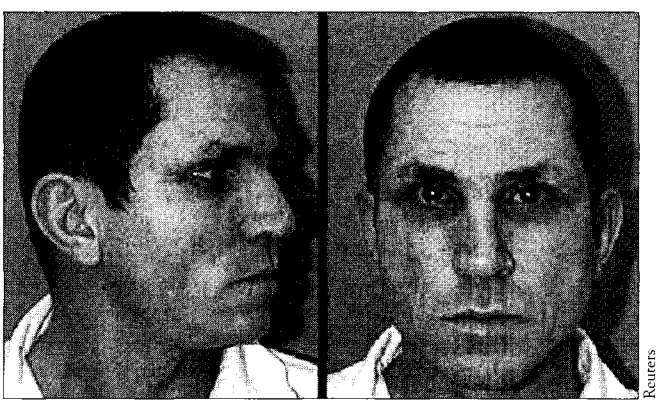
the act he was committing was wrong, then he lacked the mental state that makes him personally responsible for his crime. In no state can an insane defendant be executed.

But mental retardation is a different matter. Conventionally, it is measured by a score on an intelligence test. If your IQ is no more than 65 or 70 (when the average IQ is 100), you can be considered retarded. Just how retarded you are depends on how low the score is, as well as on other features of your personality.

THE STUPIDITY EXCUSE

Why should being stupid excuse one from a penalty that is routinely imposed on people who are not stupid? The answer is that retarded persons may not be able to participate effectively in their own defense. They may be suggestible, ready to agree to a police officer's misleading claim that they broke the law, or be unable to tell their attorneys what they need to know in order to represent them effectively.

But these precise questions are ordinarily brought before the court (and should be brought before it in every relevant case) as a matter of elementary fairness. No court should allow a person to plead guilty wrongly or to give his lawyer inadequate help. When presidential candidate George W. Bush said that Texas, which had no law barring the execution of the retarded, did not need such a law, I suspect he had these legal requirements in mind. Since he spoke, the Texas legislature passed a bill exempting the mentally retarded from the death penalty, but it was vetoed by Gov. Rick Perry.



Reuters

Death Row inmate Johnny Paul Penry

Depending on the state, you can be called retarded on the basis of an IQ test, or the judgment of experts, or some combination of the two. Connecticut law, for example, defines retardation as "a significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning," and this means doing poorly on "one or more of the individually administered general intelligence tests." Now, if you wish to be considered retarded, your first task is to do poorly on this test. Unlike doing well, doing poorly is easy—just pretend you can't remember some numbers, assemble some pictures, or define some words.

As long as the IQ test is the key variable and mental retardation is a mitigating factor, people facing trial have a powerful incentive to cheat on the test: Get a low score and you keep the needle out of your arm. Now, one might be able to overcome this bias if scientists perfect some means to measure IQ directly without any test-taking. For example, a machine might be devised that will measure average evoked brain potential. That potential, crudely put, is the amount of electrical energy radiated by the brain after it experiences some sharp stimulus, such as listening to a clicking sound. Studies suggest that this measured brain potential correlates with IQ. But machines that can measure IQ directly and accurately in this way do not yet exist, though if the elite hostility to IQ research could be eased, they might well be produced. If such machines do become available, then the chances that a suspect will be able to cheat on the IQ test will be reduced.

In states such as Florida, by contrast, two court-appointed experts are to evaluate a defendant's mental capacity. If they find he is retarded he will not be subject to the death penalty no matter how guilty he may be. But in defining retardation, Florida says pretty much what Connecticut says: You are retarded if your IQ is more than two standard deviations below the average (which would make it roughly 70 or lower), coupled with "deficits in adaptive behavior" manifested between birth and age 18.

One has to wonder a bit about how skilled such experts will be at determining retardation (especially in measuring childhood "deficits in adaptive behavior"), how much power will be invested in judges by allowing them to pick the experts, the opportunities for endless litigation about the experts' verdict, and whether experts will do a better job than jurors in assessing retardation. Even in Texas, a juror who believes the defendant is retarded can consider this a mitigating factor and by so voting block the imposition of the death penalty.

But the real problem that may confuse the public is the difference between retardation and competence. Some people with an IQ below 70 may well be competent to stand trial in the sense that they know certain actions are wrong, can communicate to their attorneys all of the relevant facts, and testify with credibility. In some cases, being competent simply means not being insane, but competency can include more than the absence of insanity. For example, a person may be sane but incompetent to stand trial if he does not have a sufficient ability to consult with his lawyer with a reasonable degree of rationality and factual knowledge about the trial of which he is a part.

Some people with an IQ *above* 70 may not be competent. A reasonably bright person may, because of some strong personality disorder, be incoherent or disruptive. If a defendant is found incompetent to stand trial, he is usually sent to a mental institution and then, if and when he recovers, brought back for trial.

Barring the execution of a person simply because the IQ (whether measured accurately or not) is below 70 makes little sense. It can be made to *appear* to make sense by a simple, misleading spin: "How can we execute a man who has the brain of a six-year-old?" This is a clever way of converting a complex issue into a made-for-TV sound bite.

Of course, we don't execute six-year-olds, but for a reason that has little to do with mental ability. Six-year-old children have not had the benefits of those human experiences, practical circumstances, and adult guidance that would have made them a morally complete person, one able to grasp the wrongness of certain actions and the consequences that will flow from them. But an adult, even one with a low IQ, may well know exactly what he is doing when he breaks the law and understand full well the consequences of being caught. Many

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low-IQ offenders, just like most high-IQ ones, go to great lengths to conceal their crimes and evade detection. Among the Texas defendants who are described as retarded are men who killed their victims after raping them in order to prevent them from squealing.

Moreover, saying that an adult man with an IQ of 65 has the mind of a six-year-old child is not correct. IQ measures are standardized on a population of equivalent persons (say, all children or all adults). Having a low adult IQ is a measure of how well you compare to other adults who have taken the same test. A six-year-old child, by contrast, has an IQ (and it may be very high or very low) that is measured in comparison with that of other children.

The central issue is not retardation but competence. I would not be surprised to learn that low-IQ defendants make up a disproportionate share of those found to be incompetent to stand trial any more than I would be surprised to learn that high-IQ defendants make up a disproportionate share of those found to be competent. But the key question is not to measure their IQ or to allow experts to decide whether they are retarded; it is, instead, to decide if they are competent to stand trial. No one who is incompetent should stand trial or be executed as a result of a conviction.

'EVOLVING STANDARDS OF DECENCY'

When the U.S. Supreme Court decided in 1989 a case involving a mentally retarded convict, it ruled, 5 to 4, that the defendant, one Johnny Paul Penry, had in fact been found competent to stand trial and that he clearly understood that it was wrong to have killed his victim. But the Court also said that the jurors in his trial had not been properly alerted to the fact that they could consider retardation or childhood abuse, and so the case went back to Texas for a new trial. But the Court also said that, in time, such executions might be found unconstitutionally cruel and unusual. In 1989, only a few death-penalty states exempted the mentally retarded, and so the Court held that American opinion had not produced those "evolving standards of decency" that would bar such executions.

Today more states have become dissenters and so the Court now may take a different view of the matter. Even Penry's case has been back before the Court: This year it overturned his execution again because in its opinion the jury in the new Texas trial had failed to consider fully his mental retardation. But the broader question of constitutionality may be settled in the case of Ernest McCarver, a North Carolina Death Row inmate who claims to be retarded.

If the Court decides that executing him constitutes cruel and unusual punishment, this will irritate many people who think the Court has no business reading public opinion into the Constitution. I tend to agree with them, but I also recognize that this is in fact what the Court often does. We have desegregated schools today, not because the Constitution or its amendments require it, but because the Court decided in 1954 that (for a variety of rather badly stated reasons) segregation was wrong. It may reach the same judgment on mental retardation, but I hope it would first try to clarify how retardation differs from competency and why a legally competent albeit retarded defendant deserves special protection. You may dislike judges creating law by changing what the phrase "cruel and unusual" means, but remember that neither the Constitution nor the Congress that drafted it gave it any meaning. To define it, the Court will inevitably have to consider the state of public opinion just as they might have in 1800 if they thought they should abolish torture. In 1977, the Court barred the execution of a man who had raped but not killed a woman because capital punishment was an "excessive" (I suppose cruel) penalty. In making this decision, the majority explicitly referred to the need to consider public opinion and what legislatures had done about it.

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The central issue is not retardation but competence. . . . No one who is incompetent should stand trial or be executed as a result of a conviction.

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If the Court bars executions of the mentally retarded, the main task of state legislatures will be to devise ways of preventing the "stupidity excuse" from being manipulated by scheming defendants, just as the "frail old man" excuse has been tried by some Mafia leaders. I am not at all certain how the legislatures will do this.

Some people claim that between one-tenth and one-fifth of all people on Death Row are retarded. They may well be right. Murderers who get caught are often not very bright. The best we can hope for, I suspect, is to insist that state law make it very clear that a jury, and not some experts, will get to decide whether a person is retarded, and that the law will ensure that if a retarded person committed a crime that, if done by a smarter one, would result in execution, he will be kept in prison for life without the possibility of parole. **NR**

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The Incredible Shrinking Past

Why it puts the future at risk

MICHAEL KNOX BERAN

SOMETIMES a statesman's minor actions are more disturbing than his grandest gestures. British prime minister Tony Blair's recent emasculation of the House of Lords did little to advance his New Labour cause; and yet the ease with which Blair staged his little exercise in Downing Street hooliganism rankled all the same. The bully-boy impunity with which he kicked sand in the faces of so many fuddy-duddy descendants of Norman knights rankled more, indeed, than some of Labour's most ambitious projects (such as European unity).

Blair's dismantling of the House of Lords—the cavalier way Cool Britannia chased the hereditary peers out of that ancient assembly—irritated in part because the prime minister was under no compulsion to do it. There were no angry crowds in Whitehall, demanding the final humiliation of the landed aristocracy. There was little agitation in cyberspace, no unruly chat rooms baying for blood and eager for the disfranchisement of the last remnant of feudalism. Typically, in Britain, a constitutional crisis precedes constitutional reform. The last major overhaul of the House of Lords—legislation that, among other things, deprived the peers of their veto power over money bills—came after the upper house rejected Asquith and Lloyd George's "People's Budget" in 1909. No comparable difficulty, however, precipitated the current round of reform. This tells us something about Blair, and about modern Britain; but it tells us even more about the spirit of an age that can look with equanimity upon the destruction of the genially archaic. And it's not just Britain's problem, either.

Nearly a century ago, Oswald Spengler—a German *Privatdozent*, a species of independent scholar now almost as extinct as the English peerage—prophesied the nearness of the last days of the West. Substitute "casual days" for "last days" and you have a more accurate characterization of our situation, the banality of our success. What is it about prosperity that makes a well-fed crowd complacently dismiss all that came before it? In matters ranging from the content of the school curriculum to the rituals of everyday politeness, from the constitution of the literary canon to the meaning of marriage, conservative arguments for keeping open multiple lines of communication to the past simply aren't working.

Even good arguments would probably fail to pierce the complacent belly of a fat time. But conservatives these days often work with unpersuasive arguments. In defending institutions that preserve a faded memory of older forms of virtue, they too readily succumb to the delusions of nostalgia. Nostalgia is itself a form of contempt for the past, an elegiac mode unconcerned with what really happened in history. Conservatives indulge its guilty pleasures whenever they ground their arguments in an appeal to the Golden Age, that halcyon period when pride still mattered, or character, or sexual continence, or you name it—the morally ideal world we have lost. Just when the happy time ended is a matter of contention; different conservatives propose different trajectories of decadence. The 1960s, the 1930s, the coming of the Romantics, the dawn of the Renaissance—each holds an attraction for various enthusiasts of decline.

But what we have lost is not so much a superior past—swallowed up in the dismal here-and-now—as a habit of *thinking* about the past, a habit that enabled previous generations to construct genuinely better futures. One of the important achievements of the post-classical West was to *break* a cycle of despairing nostalgia—to show that the past could be something more than an object of endless lamentation. Although sentimental moderns like to celebrate the ability of the ancient Greeks to live joyously in the present moment, the culture of antiquity was in reality morbidly rooted in the past, mired in various forms of ancestor worship. Homer, the educator of Hellas, is a poet of nostalgia: In a mean and fallen present, he longs for the vanished heroes of the Bronze Age. For Thucydides' Athenians—dying horrible deaths in the rock quarries near Syracuse—there is no possibility of redemption. "Having done what men could," the historian says, "they suffered what men must."

Then came the breakthrough. The Jewish and Christian traditions, with their more spacious messianic conceptions of time, pointed to a way out of despair. In these traditions the past and the future are intimately involved with each other. In a phrase like "I am Alpha and Omega," the extremities of time touch. The past not only prefigures the future, it contains the seeds of future growth. In the Christian tradition, the Old Testament presages the New Testament, and both the old and the new dispensations contain the germ that will eventually blossom into the unexampled felicity of a new heaven and a new earth.

This notion of a root kernel of purpose—grounded in the past and progressively revealed over time—has long been at work in the Western historical imagination, from the apocalypse of St. John the Divine, through the theories of Joachim of Fiore and Hegel, to the English lawyers who discern the seeds of liberty in the Magna Carta and the American constitutional historians who believe that the promise of the Declaration of Independence is being slowly realized over time.

It is this expansive vision of historical possibility that modern conservatives need to recover. Instead of saying, "The past was better, everything now is going to hell," the conservative must say, "In the past we will find things that, when combined with elements of our present life, will lead us to something different from either the past or the present, and in some ways better than both." Conservatives can then work to sell the past for what it is: not an excuse for elegy, but a driver of progress.

For this is what the past really is—or, rightly understood, can be. Man's great leaps forward—the thoughts that bring the race a little farther along, the insights that open up unanticipated vistas in science or art—very often result from the playful interaction between a creative mind and the historical traditions that mind encounters. A voice crying out of the

Mr. Beran is the author of *The Last Patrician: Bobby Kennedy and the End of American Aristocracy.*

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depths of the past can change the course of a life that is itself destined to alter the face of the future. Virgil did this for Dante, Livy for Machiavelli, Plutarch for Rousseau. Shakespeare, too, expanded on Plutarch's meaning; and it is difficult to imagine what Wordsworth would have been without Milton.

A similar creativity in marshaling the resources of the past has been displayed by some of the most astute statesmen of the last few centuries—by Madison and Hamilton in the *Federalist Papers*, by Disraeli as he fashioned a modern Tory sensibility, and by Winston Churchill, whom Isaiah Berlin credited with a "historical imagination so strong, so comprehensive, as to encase the whole of the present and the whole of the future in a framework of a rich and multicoloured past."

HOW WE LOST IT

Can we recover this notion of the progressive virtues of the past? Maybe—but only if we first understand how it came to be lost. It used to be that canny progressives cherished their connections to the past. Francis Bacon wrote history; so did Voltaire. Both Jefferson and Gladstone fantasized about living in the world of Homer's heroes. The old type of progressive was something of a burrower, like Milton or John Adams, familiar with all sorts of obscure byways leading backward into the recesses of time.

At some point this changed. Theories were developed—bastard offspring of the Romantic cult of self—that exalted the mind's "natural" or "original energy," undisciplined, untutored, unrefined. "I dote on myself," Walt Whitman said, because "there is a lot of me and all so luscious." A faith in the supreme value of self-expression was adopted in the schools, and generations of modern egotists were taught to balk at the period of apprenticeship to "dead poets, philosophs, priests" that any effort at emulation or mastery requires.

Contemporary historians have done little to counter this trend; they've largely failed to make the past interesting to those who have been schooled to despise it. Watching the History Channel is not a substitute for the cultivation of what T. S. Eliot called the "historical sense," and although it's good news that two books dealing with the founding of the

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT

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What's Wrong With This Picture?

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American Republic are on the bestseller lists, such triumphs cannot conceal the fact that history is today a discipline in decline. The widening gulf between the esoteric history of the professors and nonacademic popular history is only the most obvious sign of disintegration. A similar split between the modern literary novel (rarely read absent some form of compulsion) and the popular mass-readership novel (forgotten as soon as it is read) may well portend the end of the novel as a living form of art. History is approaching a similar state of atrophy, unable to please except where it stoops, unable to edify except where it bores.

Professional historians have only themselves to blame for this. They are loath to allow history to play the inspirational part for which it is naturally fitted. "The best part of history," Goethe said, "is the enthusiasm it begets." But for the professional scholar, history that seeks to rouse the imaginations of the living is "Whig history," history that, like Macaulay's tour de force of Whiggish art, *The History of England from the Accession of James II*, tries to persuade people that the past matters in the shaping of their present life. Macaulay's desire to appeal to a contemporary crowd is for today's professional historian an unpardonable sin, and in order to discourage it the academy has cultivated the dullest forms of antiquarianism, the undigested dissertations and unreadable intellectual regurgitations advertised by university presses in *The New York Review of Books*.

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History is approaching a state of atrophy, unable to please except where it stoops, unable to edify except where it bores.

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More deleterious, in its effects, than the decline of history as a discipline has been the failure of the West to develop fresh methods of mediating between the past and the future. In the private lives of individuals, of course, the mediating mechanism is automatic: Our dreams are always presenting us with versions of our past life, visions that in turn nourish our present existence, and help to prepare us for the future. But nations and civilizations do not dream; they rely on institutions to supply the mediating power of dream-life. The modern museum, for example, seeks to mediate between the ages; but even when museum staffs overcome their predilection for mere blockbuster shock, the value of their efforts is limited. Not even the most conscientious museum can occupy the vital place in our lives that, say, the Mass—with its complicated orchestration of time and history—occupied in the lives of European men and women seven or eight centuries ago. Ancient institutions like the pilgrimage no longer play the role in Western lives that they once did, and we have failed to develop adequate replacements. The modern vacation will never be a substitute for the questing journey to Canterbury or Jerusalem.

The modern university, it is true, attempts to reconcile the different historical epochs; but it is almost certainly less effective in this work than the old grammar-school curriculum, with its stubborn emphasis on the "dead" languages. Classical education of the grammar-school variety largely vanished during the 20th century, and the knowledge of Greece and Rome is now confined, even among the highly educated, to a very few. It is too soon to assess the consequences of this falling off, though it is certain that much of the literature of the post-classical West must become darker and less comprehensible to us as a result—a substantial historical loss by any standard.

CAN WE GET IT BACK?

In remote European towns relatively untouched by present-day amnesia, it is still possible to discover, in the organic design of the whole, a continuity of ages. You see it in the patient craftsmanship that has for centuries worked with the past, not against it. These towns have, of course, changed over time; the pagan temple will have been converted into a Christian basilica, a baroque palace will have gone up beside the feudal keep. Coffee came to be drunk in the square, and tractors now creep through the olive groves. But the deeper unities remain undisturbed—even by neon signs and satellite dishes. The sense of place, the presence of the past, is strong enough to assimilate these intrusions, in contrast to our modern cities and towns, with their continually provisional feel, rooted in nothing deeper than the moment.

Man is a history-making animal. He produces it for his own consumption, and must feed upon it constantly if he is to flourish. The question for us is whether we can persuade a prosperous age to take up the tools of an historically minded craftsmanship—the only tools, history shows, that reliably enable people to carve out genuinely better futures for themselves.

The good news is that there are precedents. Grand rapprochements—often the work of poets—*have* been effected between the overconfident present and the rejected past. In April 1341, Petrarch was crowned a poet—after the fashion of pagan antiquity—on the Capitoline Hill in Rome. Afterwards he crossed the Tiber to lay his laurels upon the tomb of Saint Peter in the Vatican; and two ages touched. We marvel today at the largeness of historical vision that made so exquisite a crossing possible; it is difficult for us to believe in the act of poetic will that led Petrarch's master, Dante, to demonstrate that the largest legacies of the ancient Mediterranean world—Greco-Roman civilization and Christianity, the capitol and the cross—were not mutually antipathetic (as Gibbon and Julian the Apostate would have us believe), but were rather both integral to the new civilization growing up around the young Florentine poet-politician. To Dante was granted the perception that the two historical orders were both manifestations of a larger and most comprehensive grace, *l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle*, the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.

A capacity for illumination of such magnitude may be beyond the ken of those who live in the casual days of Western history, the ember times of the civilization whose future Dante helped secure. But the challenge is nevertheless there, waiting to be taken up. Our historically minded poets should get to work. **NR**

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By Rob Long

Book Proposals from the Future

July 12, 2033
TO: Random House
RE: The "Greatest Generation"

As you may recall, the "Greatest Generation" series of media products was extremely popular 30 years ago. These products celebrated the lives and struggles of a generation of Americans who took part in World War II (the one before the one started by China) and who returned home to build suburbs, golf courses, aerospace and computer technology, strange rounded outdoor grills, and simple family units.

But what about the generation that was grandfathered by the "Greatest" generation? What about the famous Generation Y, the last completely verbal generation of Americans?

Meet the heroes of Gen-Y—in their own voices.

Meet Troy, who tells us what his life and struggle were like:
"Okay, it was like me and my dad 'cause my mom was like, totally stressing from some stuff that was up between her and her dad, so, like, she was basically not around and stuff, but, I mean, she was around, okay, but you could tell that she was, like, thinking about a lot of other stuff that was going on or whatever. So, like, I spent a lot of time on my computer and whatever and that's how I figured out the whole missile-shield deal. It was pretty cool to invent the missile shield, I guess. And when that guy from that country tried to blow us up or whatever and the missile shield worked and stuff, I was all, 'Hey, pretty cool,' and everyone was all, 'Hey, Troy, you're a hero, and whatever,' and that was cool."

Meet Montana:
"Oh my God! I am just so freaking out right now remembering how it was back in, oh my God, 2001. Oh. My. God! Back then I was *twenty*! I'm fifty-three today, and I am just so freaking out about it! I told my daughter the other day that I was having this major meltdown about the passage of time and she just totally dissed me in a majorly rude way and I wanted to grab her and say "Hey! Props to your mom, okay?" She doesn't have any idea what my life has been all about, or what I've done. I used to follow Phish around—you know Phish? the band?—and to make money I'd make these stupid scented candles and sell them in the parking lot? And then one day I wasn't paying attention or something and some of the hummus I was eating got accidentally stirred into the scented wax, and, well, long story short, that was the beginning of what became the biggest selling fat substitute in food-additive history. And my daughter's like, completely not interested in what her mother invented. That's the problem with kids—they just have no respect."

Meet Jamal and Tyrelle:
"Yeah, we're old school, I guess. Back in the day, we were pretty hardcore rappers—you know—with the angry expression and the gangster outlook. We were pretty much the last regular rappers to come down the pike—worked with Snoop Dogg and Puffy Combs on the last regular rap album back in 2003. That was right before they discovered that rap cures colon cancer—I want to say 2004? Maybe later? I'm not sure. You get in your sixties, man, you just start to forget stuff, you know? Anyway, something about the music just gets inside the colon and shakes it loose. I'm happy it helps, of course, but there's not much money in it now, especially since the HMOs got involved."

Meet Zeke:
"At first I was all, 'Me? A hero?' And then I got to thinking about it and I realized that, yeah, I am a hero, I guess. I mean, back in 2002 I just wanted a job, you know? And I knew stuff about computers, and there was a CompUSA in the mall near my house, and my mom and dad were, like, TOTALLY on my case about getting a job for the summer, so it was like a no-brainer or whatever you call it. It's hard to explain this all to my kids—they're all, 'Dad! Dad! Tell us why you're famous and on the twenty-dollar bill," and I'm all, "I've told you a million times." But they like to hear the story again. A simple story, actually. A guy comes into CompUSA and he's ready to spend, like, four thousand bucks on a new computer system, and so I ask him what he's going to use it for, and he tells me, and I just sort of blurt out without thinking, "Dude! You don't need a computer! You need a PAD OF PAPER!" and he looks at me like I'm insane and says, "What about the Internet?" And I just blurt out again, without thinking, "Dude! The Internet SUCKS!" But I guess I was the first guy at a CompUSA to admit that, and so when word got out, people stopped buying computers and surfing the Internet and everybody was so much happier, all from that one little thing and from me just blurting out the truth at that CompUSA."

These are the heroes of Generation Y—truly the Greatest Generation.

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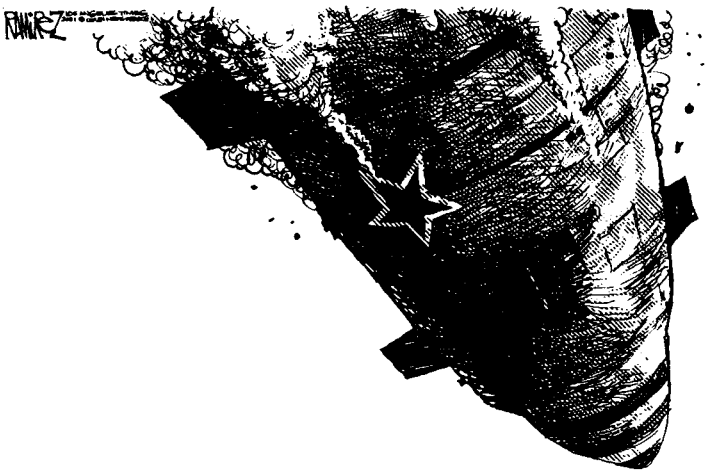

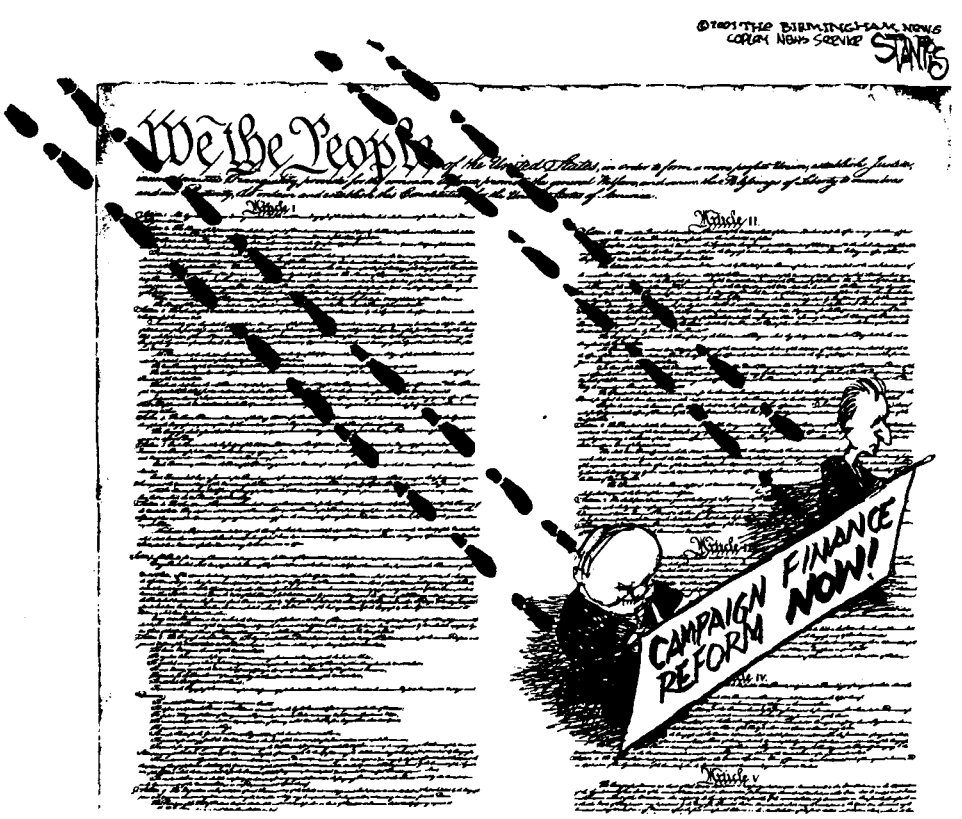

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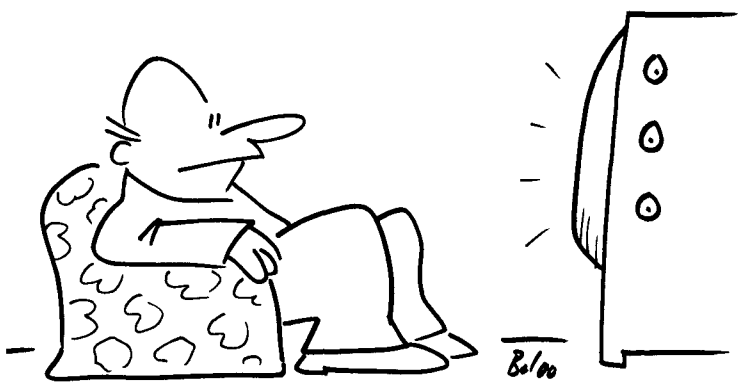

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Refluxes watching Mary Jo,
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—W. H. von Dreele

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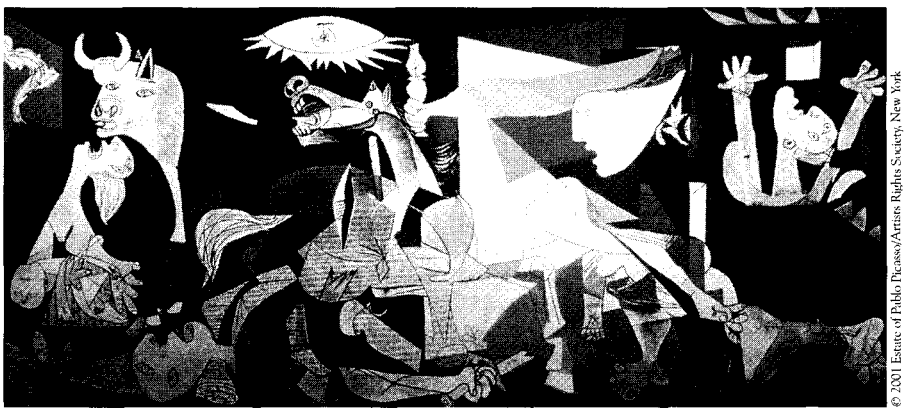
Experiment in Terror

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

Spain Betrayed: The Soviet Union in the Spanish Civil War, edited by Ronald Radosh, Mary R. Habeck, and Grigory Sevostianov (Yale, 537 pp., $35)



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Picasso's Guernica *(1937)*

To contemporaries, the Spanish Civil War seemed an epic, even biblical, struggle between Communism and Fascism, in other words between good and evil. And to most contemporaries, the outcome was appalling: The Fascist victory meant that there was no chance to put Communism into practice in western Europe, and no chance either to stop Hitler in his tracks. Communists and their supporters have argued ever since that they alone made any serious attempt to head off the coming world war. Whatever bad things Communists may have done elsewhere, in Spain their cause was pure to the point of being romantic. As a result of a good many histories and memoirs, that remains today the generally accepted opinion.

Spain Betrayed is a formidable demolition of this myth. It consists of a collection of 81 previously unpublished documents from the Russian State Military Archives, all of them reports from Soviet agents and advisers in the field during the civil war. The material is specialized, to be sure, an account of day-to-day political and military events, sometimes in the most minute detail, but the editors place everything in context with brief and helpful introductory commentaries. One of them, Ronald Radosh, is a former Communist whose uncle fought in Spain. In recent writings, including an autobiography, Radosh has been coming to terms with his previous disastrous misjudgments, and this book is another step in that process. The two other editors are academics: Mary R. Habeck of Yale and Grigory Sevostianov of Moscow's Institute of Universal History.

One way or another, these documents all went through the Comintern, the bureau in Moscow that ran Soviet operations abroad for Stalin. The Comintern could call on the services of its own operatives; the secret police, later called the KGB; military intelligence or the GRU; and the European Communist parties. Taken together, these documents show that Stalin aimed to transform Spain into a Soviet satellite. In that case, he would have extended the Communist reach, and encircled both Germany and France.

Poor and backward, Spain in the early 20th century was a failed monarchy with a history of coups and ineffective parliamentary regimes. In the Thirties, the conservative Right faced a strangely assorted Left of Communists, socialists, and anarchists, generally categorized as Republicans, unable to agree among themselves but each promoting with rising intolerance their particular brand of revolution. Spain was the only country in the world with a mass movement of anarchists—the disciples of Bakunin, Marx's bitter enemy. Improbable as it was, the Left formed a coalition under Francisco Largo Caballero, a veteran socialist trade-union leader known as the Spanish Lenin. Early in 1936, the Popular Front came to power legitimately through elections. That summer, the murder of the conservative leader José Calvo Sotelo coincided with a military uprising of self-styled Nationalists under Francisco Franco, an obscure general in command of Spanish and Moroccan troops, the latter particularly ferocious. Atrocities committed by both sides inflamed passions to the point that there could be no compromise.

Reluctant to support either side, Britain and France did not intervene. This decision was right, but taken for the wrong reasons, as part of the wider policy of appeasing dictators that was already creating a political vacuum in Europe. Aware of their own weaknesses, both sides in Spain appealed to the dictators for help: the Republicans to Stalin, the Nationalists to Hitler and Mussolini. Responding favorably, the dictators were each probing in the political vacuum for influence and power. The civil war therefore assumed the international character of a struggle between rival ideologies.

The mustering of forces brought to a head the collective delusion of so many intellectuals of the Thirties, among whom Communism had taken hold with the fervor of messianic religion. All manner of celebrities, Nobel-prize scien-

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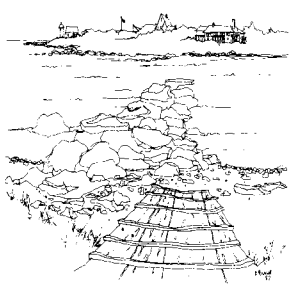
tists and writers and philosophers, united in praise of Stalin and his Soviet Union. Well-intentioned people were naturally prone to believe that so many prominent thinkers and artists must be right, and that Communism represented progress. Intellectuals flocked to Spain to usher in salvation by means of ecstatic eyewitness accounts and reports, news bulletins, novels, and films. The humbler sort drove ambulances and served as nurses. Some 50,000 men from a score of countries volunteered to fight in the International Brigade. Here was nothing less than a crusade.

Revolution, and its images of waving flags and disheveled men brandishing weapons in the back of trucks, seemed to radiate invisible powers. The battles of Madrid and Brunete and Teruel, the fall of Málaga, appeared as stations of a *via dolorosa*. Legendary icons included Picasso's *Guernica*, the century's most celebrated painting, and Robert Capa's photograph (the authenticity of which has been called seriously into question) of a soldier in the very moment of falling for the cause, arms extended as in crucifixion.

One of the most furious and effective pamphlets ever published was "Authors Take Sides on the Spanish War," in which 127 leading intellectuals declared themselves pro-Communist. Sixteen were neutral (including T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and H. G. Wells), while only five dissented (one of them Evelyn Waugh). In one of the century's most celebrated poems, W. H. Auden wrote, "Yesterday the Sabbath of witches; but today the struggle." In another stanza of that poem, the line, "The conscious acceptance of guilt in the necessary murder," perfectly illustrates the moral sink into which delusion about Communism could lead an otherwise gifted man. George Orwell was to retort that it could only have been written by someone who was elsewhere when the trigger was pulled.



By 1936, in somber fact, Stalin was presiding over a campaign of mass murder. Hitler was evidently another dangerous and ambitious criminal. The supposition that Communism alone could successfully confront Nazism was central to the simplification of the Spanish Civil War as an apocalyptic struggle between good and evil. But the equation was false. Far from being at opposite poles of the political spectrum, the dictators were two of a kind, equal in inhumanity.

Professional historians by and large used to maintain that Stalin was sincerely anti-Fascist, but cautiously engaged in a balancing act, sending enough aid to the Popular Front to ensure that it would not lose, but not so much that it would win and thereby provoke Hitler into an all-out confrontation. Destroying this benign theory, recent historians have shown that, all the while, Stalin was secretly sounding out Hitler, with a view to agreeing on spheres of influence between them, as was shortly achieved in the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939. It has further emerged that Stalin took the Spanish government's gold reserve for safekeeping, but helped himself to it in payment for the arms he supplied. By imposing an exchange value more than twice the official rate, he swindled his supposed allies and clients out of hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Comintern at first employed an Argentinian Communist named Vittorio Codovilla as its leading representative in Spain. In mid 1937, he was replaced by Palmiro Togliatti, the Italian Communist Party secretary, whose reports are particularly subtle. Another Comintern representative with special responsibility for the International Brigade was the Frenchman André Marty, known as "the butcher of Albacete" and commemorated by Hemingway in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* for his indiscriminate use of terror against friend and foe alike. Also reporting to the Comintern was a range of Soviet ambassadors and consuls, commissars, and military experts, all of whom had to operate within the context of Stalin's Great Terror. Many were recalled to Moscow and summarily shot.

One of the most fascinating documents in the collection is a report dated December 1937. It is over seventy pages

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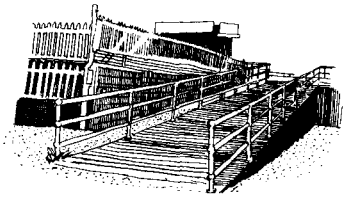
long and written by Manfred Stern, a capable and loyal brigade commander who was well known by the pseudonym General Emilio Kléber. Indeed, he was idolized. Stern/Kléber depicts uninterrupted bickering, intrigues, and jealousies among his Soviet colleagues, the Spanish Communist forces, and the International Brigades, which doomed their performance in the field. Trying to justify himself in elaborate and sometimes fictitious detail, he was in fact pleading for his life. Shortly denounced by one of his seniors as an enemy of the people, Stern too then vanished.

These men were for the most part highly qualified, and some had real political talents. They seem to have understood quite early on that the Communists were unlikely to win, but they had to dress up such a message to Stalin in guarded and suitably Marxist language. To eavesdrop now on their private traffic is to be overwhelmed by the servility with which they presented or twisted the facts so that Stalin would learn what he wanted to learn, and by the incredible discrepancy between what Stalin was actually doing and what the pro-Communist crusaders imagined.

Stalin soon realized that Largo Caballero was no Spanish Lenin. A stubborn and obstructive man, Caballero would have to go. It was bad enough that he proved an ineffective war leader, but worse that he could not control the anarchists. Their objective was revolution, which they held to be the indispensable condition for winning the war. But anarchist revolution risked openly embroiling Stalin with Hitler. Stalin needed a pretext to suppress them, and in documents included here dating from the first part of 1937, his advisers duly furnished one. To be a Trotskyite, as Trotsky and Stalin's other rivals had already learned, was a guaranteed death sentence. The advisers trumped up the absurd charge that anarchists and Trotskyites were one and the same.



These documents also show how deftly Comintern agents manipulated Largo Caballero out of office in May 1937, to replace him with Juan Negrín, a dim professor of physiology, and an outright Stalinist stooge. The most horrible sequence of events in the civil war could then occur, starting that very May in Barcelona, where the Communists turned on the anarchists and bloodily suppressed them. The Communists have always blamed the anarchists for this, but the documents of that month, above all Document 44, a report from the front by an agent named Goratsy states that the Communists "had terrible hatred towards the anarchists—greater than towards the fascists" and favored "a final reckoning" with them. The editors give this document great importance.

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For the Soviets, Spain was a laboratory in which to experiment with the imperialism they were later to refine in eastern Europe.

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The anarchist leader Andrés Nin was murdered, and the crime made to look like the deed of German agents. André Marty kept the firing squads busy and members of the International Brigade were among his victims. George Orwell had served in the front line with anarchists, where he received a Nationalist bullet through the throat. Recuperating in Barcelona, he escaped the Communist massacre by sheer luck, and in *Homage to Catalonia* he described how Communism had here shown itself the same in practice as Nazism. As a result, he almost failed to find a publisher, and in literary circles became an unperson—a word he invented for any free spirit who told the truth. After the Barcelona bloodshed, Negrín and the Soviets ran a police state along KGB lines, complete with denunciation, torture, and more bullets in the neck for all who stepped out of line.

Betraying the Left and putting down the anarchists, Stalin frustrated revolution in Spain. In that paradoxical sense, the Communists had a conservative effect. No less paradoxical, Franco's victory may well have saved Britain in 1940. After the fall of France, Hitler planned to send troops to seize Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. Denied Middle Eastern oil, Britain could not have held out. As it was, Franco refused to grant passage to the German army, and Hitler could do nothing about it. But he need have had no scruples about launching a blitzkrieg against a Communist Spain, especially at a time when he had tied Stalin's hands with a pact.

For the Soviets, Spain was a laboratory in which to experiment with the imperialism they were later to refine in eastern Europe, and afterwards as far afield as Chile, Nicaragua, and Ethiopia. In terms of strategy, they learned that the presence of the Red Army was the decisive factor in taking over countries against their will. In terms of tactics, they learned to exile or kill opponents rapidly, and then to co-opt into a temporary coalition leftists of the stamp of Negrín, pliable or corrupt nonentities who afforded a façade of democratic legitimacy. Spain was the prototype for a "people's democracy," as installed in satellites throughout the post-1945 Soviet empire.

Franco remained a political pariah to the end of his life. His regime, unpleasant but rather mild by the standard of authoritarian regimes, was considered on a par with Hitler's. Happy to visit Moscow, liberals made a point of boycotting Spain. Perpetuating the myth of Communism derived from the Spanish Civil War, they extended it to other countries and other times. Whenever Soviet or local Communists took over somewhere new, there were invariably throngs of intellectuals to approve, continuing to assert that assault and murder were actually progressive. Flattered by the abiding vision of themselves as salvationist crusaders, these people were their own willing dupes, and the status of intellectuals as a whole has still not recovered. The phenomenon is hallucinating.

Spain Betrayed adds greatly to the body of knowledge about contemporary history. Its information will penetrate slowly but surely, straightening the record and helping to restore respect for intellect and truth. It ought to be impossible for anyone again to argue that Communism in Spain was a noble cause, but that may be too much to expect. **NR**

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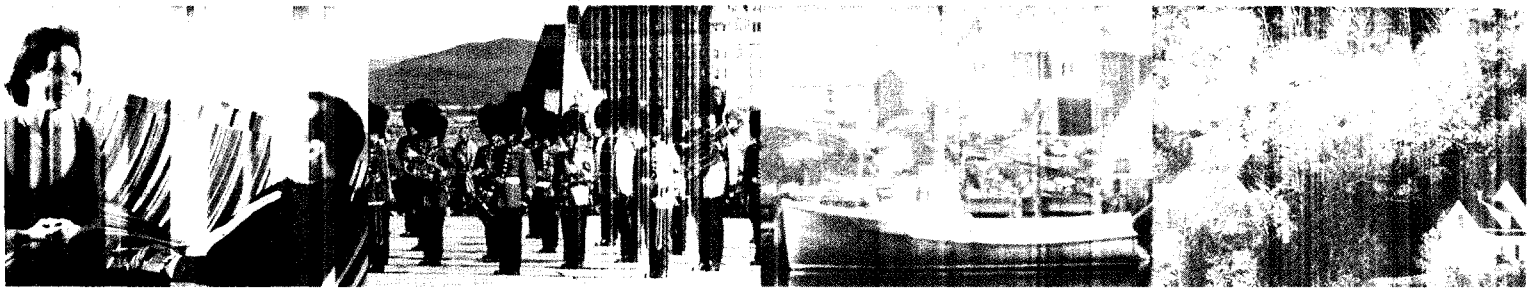

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First Steps

JAMES GARDNER

The Complete Short Stories of Marcel Proust, translated by Joachim Neugroschel (Cooper Square Press, 224 pp., $25.95)

WAS there ever a great writer who began less auspiciously than Marcel Proust? His first book, *Les Plaisirs et les jours*, now ably translated, along with six additional pieces, by Joachim Neugroschel, so disgusted one reviewer that he ended up fighting a duel with its 25-year-old author. Others were less demonstrative only because they couldn't summon the energy for a more emphatic dismissal. And while it is true that the novelist Pierre Loti praised the book, a posthumous examination of his library reveals that he never even cut the pages of his complimentary volume.

Part of the problem was the hype that surrounded the book when it was first published in 1896, bound in sumptuous turquoise cloth. No one could fawn like Proust when he wanted a dedicatory preface, and he succeeded in bagging the elephant when he cozened old Anatole France, then at the summit of his glory, to churn out two pages of measured introductory praise. Proust also secured the blessings of Madeleine Lemaire, a formidable *saloniste* who sprinkled the book with some innocuous flower paintings (though not before requiring that Proust "remove certain pieces that are a bit muddled and dull" and that he also do something about the "immaturities that are found in each line and phrasings that are somewhat awkward").

Yet such was the chronic unsuccess of *Les Plaisirs et les jours* that, two decades later, when Proust had won the Prix Goncourt and was already a pillar of modernist literature, his first book remained a standing jest in the French literary world. Only 329 copies had been sold by 1918, and the publisher was looking for anyone to relieve him, "*à très bas prix*," of 1,071 more that continued to clutter his basement.

In time, Proust himself would come to believe that an air of effete paltriness hung over the whole affair. Most of the stories in this volume of juvenilia aspire to be character studies of their young and neurotic protagonists. But it is evident that Proust is thoroughly dazzled by their aristocratic pedigree. To invoke the expression of a later age, he is "acting out" his own arriviste fantasies through heroes like the protagonist of "The Death of Baldassare Silvande, Viscount of Sylvania," dying before his time, or the pining daughter of the Viscount of Styria in "Violante or High Society." Another story, "The Melancholy Summer of Madame de Breyves,"

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Proust almost pretends not to be writing fiction at all, but coolly analyzing the human condition after the fashion of a psychologist or philosopher.

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begins typically: "That evening, Françoise de Breyves wavered for a long time between Princess Elisabeth d'A.'s party, the opera, and the Livrays' play." A similar tone dominates "A Dinner in High Society" and "The End of Jealousy," which takes place in "the salon of Madame Seaune, née Princesse de Galaise-Orlandes." Proust is so enamored of this rarefied world that he is quite incapable of subjecting it to the psychological vivisection that would become the most eminent quality of his seven-volume masterpiece.

And yet, never was the child more father to the man than the author of this book is father to the author of *A la recherche du temps perdu*. What begins here as a mildly pretentious pose becomes, two decades later, a monumental cultural reality. But the resemblance between Proust's earliest and latest works goes beyond their shared worldview. Unlike the roughly contemporary Rilke and Joyce, whose mature works are radically different from what went before, it seems clear that the young Marcel was training to become the mature Proust from the time of his earliest published pieces.

In a purely formal sense, Proust never became a modernist. Like Joyce and Rilke, he came of age during that vague and vaporous movement known as symbolism. It was a time when dysthymic aesthetes scribbled poems on fans and indited sonnets to peacocks and ormolu. Many readers of *Les Plaisirs et les jours* will be surprised to find the young author trying his hand at poetry, mostly Baudelaire-inspired descriptions of artists like Watteau, Van Dyck, and, of all people, Paulus Potter, the prince of Dutch cow painters. From such a culture would also emerge Joyce's *Pomes Penyeach* and Rilke's *Das Buch der Bilder*. But while these writers would soon cross from the tortured coherence of late symbolism into the integrated incoherence of *Ulysses* and the *Duino Elegies*, Proust remained faithful to the aesthetic terms of *Les Plaisirs et les jours*. The relationship of his earliest and latest work suggests an analogy to the music of Gustav Mahler: He too pushes the aesthetic formula he had inherited to the point of collapse, but, like Proust, he seems to step back from the brink at the very last possible moment.

In this reluctance Proust reveals the essential conservatism of French literature: Though France has had as many notable literary revolutionaries as any other country, one senses that even her most radical writers would sooner chop off their hand than misuse the imperfect subjunctive. And despite Mme Lemaire's depreciative comments about Proust's prose, in *Les Plaisirs et les jours* just as in *A la recherche*, he is the summation of that Gallic passion for *la bonne forme*.

True, his sentences, as ably reflected in Joachim Neugroschel's translation, are not yet the thousand-word monsters of *Sodome et Gomorrhe*. And sometimes, as in "A Young Girl's Confession," you hear a staccato zip that Proust would later suppress: "At last my deliverance is approaching. Of course I was clumsy, my aim was poor, I almost missed

Mr. Gardner is the art critic of the *New York Post*.

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"A Feast Fit for a Glutton."

—*Norman Podhoretz*

In a bravura Buckley touch, he opens this collection of his speeches with a brutally funny essay on the horrors of the speaking circuit. The effect is to make us even more grateful for the lucidity and charm that follow. Mr. Buckley also has a rare advantage over—well, over almost anyone else who might contemplate a project like this: It is impossible to read these speeches without hearing Mr. Buckley's famous voice. That adds to the pleasure.

In one of the speeches collected here, Bill Buckley instructs a class of 18-year-olds on their paramount responsibility—to enjoy yourself as you go. There lies the key to Buckley's extraordinary career, which like this book spans a half century (and counting), from pre-Korea to post-Lewinsky. Whether as novelist, editor, prose stylist, or public speaker, he always makes clear the pleasure he derives from intellectual engagement. The pleasure is infectious, and anyone who reads this exhilarating book will catch it too.

From first to last the speeches in this book make for elucidating, entertaining, thought-provoking reading. Whether eulogizing a departed friend or joshing at the expense of a still-living friendly adversary, or bemoaning the current state of the culture, or singing the praises of some worthy aspect of our society, or ruminating on the state of the world, Bill Buckley's collected speeches are of enduring value. They are well wrought, sometimes intricately devised, absorbing.

Let Us Talk of Many Things is an astonishing book. Absolutely nobody's speeches read well in their entirety. Buckley's do. Completely, compellingly, wonderfully readable, every single one of them.

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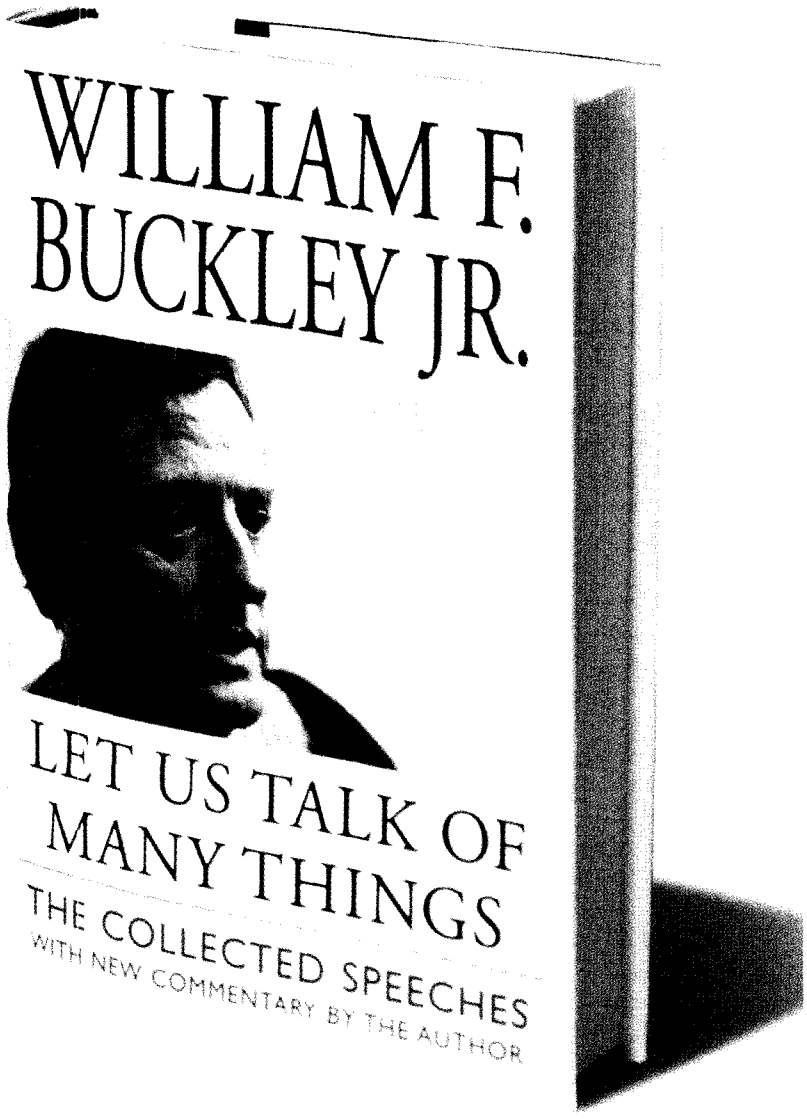

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myself." Also there are touches of poetry that occur nowhere else in Proust, like this invocation of the Tuileries in "Regrets: The Color of Time": "The morning-glories spill wildly from the vases, which are crowned with geraniums. Blazing with sunshine, the heliotrope burns its perfumes."

But if there is a tone that predominates both in these early pieces and in Proust's later work, it is one of lofty scientific dispassion: He almost pretends not to be writing fiction at all, but coolly analyzing the human condition after the fashion of a psychologist or philosopher. Thus in "The Melancholy Summer of Madame de Breyves": "She cursed her will, which could rear so impetuously and leap over hurdles so dauntlessly when her desires strove toward impossible goals—her will, so weak, so pliant, so broken not only when she was forced to disobey her desires, but also when she was driven by some other emotion."

And yet, Proust is not always this sober-sided. At times he can be mordant and witty. In a pastiche of Flaubert in "Social Ambitions and Musical Tastes of Bouvard and Pecuchet," Proust reveals a gift for mimicry and a sharp eye for social folly that he will later turn to good account in his imitation of the Goncourt journal in *Le Temps retrouvé*.

Pieces like this are among the most rewarding in *Les Plaisirs et les jours*. And yet, the fact remains that this book deserves to be read more for what it portends than for what it achieves. We should read *Les Plaisirs et les jours* because Proust wrote it; but we should read Proust because he wrote *A la recherche du temps perdu*. **NR**

■ SHELF LIFE ■

THE specialization of academic life, along with the preponderance of the Left in colleges and universities, has had a baneful effect that has become so universal as to be almost unnoticeable: It has institutionalized a bias toward the unearthing (if not fabrication) of new truths, half-truths, and even "truths" at the expense of the older verities. One of the most important conservative projects, therefore, should be to restore a healthy focus on what is true, as opposed to what is "groundbreaking."

For this reason, Liberty Fund Books is one of the most valuable endeavors in American publishing. Its goal is to make available—at remarkably low prices—the key works that make up the patrimony of the conservative mind. The large-format, nicely produced two-volume paperback edition of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* still goes for only $15; the 1,700-plus pages of James Bryce's two-volume *American Commonwealth* for $16.50; political writings of Samuel Johnson, Lord Acton, Michael Oakeshott, Richard Weaver, and other conservative giants, all at similarly rock-bottom prices. This is an antidote to liberal indoctrination that any college student can afford.

Liberty Fund's backlist, then, is something to treasure; but some of its more recent projects are equally impressive. For example, *The Founders' Constitution*, edited by Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner, is a compilation of the writings of the Framers on key questions of philosophy and political science, arranged as a clause-by-clause commentary on the text of the Constitution. The paperback set—five huge volumes for $60—belongs in every library, but is physically cumbersome, so Liberty Fund helpfully directs readers to a website, http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders, *where the entire text can be read for free*.

A couple of other recent Liberty Fund publications deserve mention. Some of historian Hugh Trevor-Roper's most interesting essays are collected in *The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Religion, the Reformation & Social Change* (451 pp., $12), originally published in 1967. In one essay, Trevor-Roper attempts to untangle the religious sources of the rise of capitalism. The conventional view is that a somnolent Catholicism, per se, was opposed to the free market, while Protestantism favored the industrious; Trevor-Roper draws a more nuanced picture, making it clear that the free market was already thriving before the Reformation—and that it was "the fatal union of Counter-Reformation Church and princely State" that made Catholic countries lag economically in the following centuries.

Conservatives who are gratified at the success of David McCullough's wonderful new biography of John Adams will find even more of the real Adams—Adams unplugged, one might say—in *The Revolutionary Writings of John Adams* (331 pp., $12), selected by C. Bradley Thompson. Adams has always suffered at the hands of Jefferson partisans, who like to portray Adams as a stick-figure stuffy aristocrat; but this new volume makes clear that Adams was a fiery polemicist who, while he valued politeness, valued truth more.

The new publications of Liberty Fund—including a just-released reprint, edited by George W. Carey and James McClellan, of the 1818 Gideon edition of *The Federalist* (656 pp., $12)—add to one of the publishing industry's most impressive catalogues. To that list—currently some 150 books—Liberty Fund is now adding volumes at the rate of more than 20 per year, original books as well as reprints. The publishing house also has visiting-scholar and postgraduate programs, and hosts more than 180 conferences a year over four continents.

Liberty Fund is approaching the status of a full-service intellectual resource: By making the great conservative works of the past so widely available, it is helping shape the character of the American people of the future.

—MICHAEL POTEMRA

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■ MUSIC ■

Mere Excellence

JAY NORDLINGER

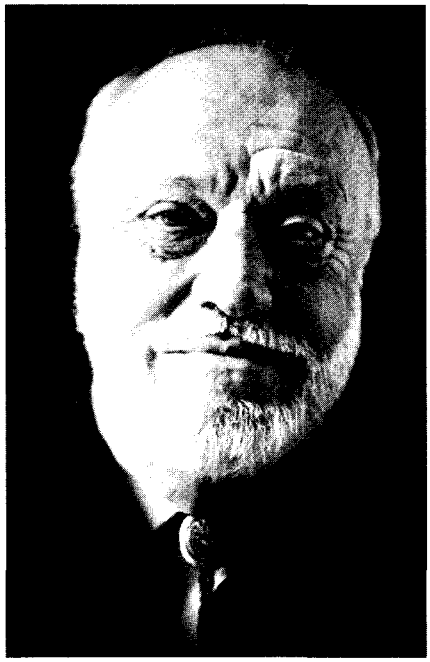
LAST month, Kurt Masur finished his second-to-the-last season with the New York Philharmonic; by this time next year, he will be gone—and that's a shame. Since he became music director in 1991, Masur has made this orchestra one of the mightiest in the world, restoring a glory that had been lost. Yet he has been grossly underappreciated here, by his own management, his own players, and the city's critics. They are giving him the bum's rush—a situation that is little less than perverse.

One forgets how bad the Philharmonic really was when Masur came to town; this forgetting, moreover, is part of the general ingratitude where this conductor is concerned. Under Zubin Mehta, the orchestra was a shambles, not necessarily because of Mehta's own failings, but because the orchestra, a notoriously fickle and petulant lot, were unwilling to play for him. The Philharmonic was really something of a joke; other orchestras—and not just first-tier ones—were playing rings around them.

But then came the sturdy maestro from Leipzig. As Rudolph Giuliani led a renaissance in the city at large—over approximately these same years—Kurt Masur led a renaissance at Avery Fisher Hall. Gone were the sloppiness and apathy of former times; in were discipline, consistency, and vitality. The Philharmonic was now no joke, but a formidable band, able to hold its head high. This did not happen by accident; it happened because Masur made the group work like dogs, and insisted on proper standards—standards necessary for mere respectability, to say nothing of glory.

And yet Philharmonic folk had various complaints and quibbles, never fully explained but probably all trivial, when not outright invalid. That's when they went to give him the bum's rush: They wanted him to leave in 1998, but the conductor, duly appalled, balked, and worked out an extension of his contract through the 2001–02 season. Even with this grace period, his exit is hasty and shabby: Masur is not yet through with the orchestra, musically. Over the last couple of seasons, he and they have been better than ever, hitting a kind of stride, producing some truly memorable performances (to go with the more ordinary ones). Worse yet, the orchestra is not exactly trading up, to put it as mildly as I can: Next on the podium is Lorin Maazel. How this came about is a tale unto itself, to be left, perhaps, for another day.

The knocks against Masur? They are several, and all dumb. The first is that, at 73, he is too old. Yet age is far from a handicap in the conducting field, most maestros needing a ripening. Some of



Frans Jansen

Kurt Masur, conductor of the New York Philharmonic—for now

the greatest conductors of the past (and, for that matter, present) have done their best work in their seventies, or even beyond. White hair is usually a reassurance on the podium. Besides which, Lorin Maazel is 71—and his own problems have nothing to do with his date of birth.

Then it is claimed that the New York Philharmonic ought to have an *American* conductor. This wish, if anything, is dumber than that for youth. The notion that an American should conduct an American orchestra—or a German a German orchestra—is foreign to the ideals and reality of music. (And need I mention that most of the critics wanting, or demanding, an American would

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The charges against Masur are several, and all dumb: age, nationality, and fuddy-duddyism.

■

no doubt shudder at nativism, or even too conspicuous a patriotism, in any other context?) Orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic are not "American orchestras"; they are orchestras on American soil, but given over to the service of music, nationality quite aside. Sure, the New York Philharmonic may play more Copland than the French National Orchestra, and the French National Orchestra may play more Roussel than the New York Philharmonic—but this is a question of a little flavoring, nothing more serious. A conductor, anyway, should be able to conduct music of any sort, even if he has an affinity or two. Think, too, of the orchestral past in America: Szell in Cleveland, Reiner in Chicago, Stokowski and Ormandy in Philadelphia, Munch in Boston, Walter in New York—did all those foreigners do any harm? Was their leadership such an affront?

Well, the flag-wavers got their American in Lorin Maazel: yet no one would mistake him for, say, Huckleberry Finn. Not only was this conductor born in France, spending his first few years there, he has had as international a career and life as anyone in the business, or any business. Frankly, I myself had never really thought of Maazel as an American until Philharmonic brass (management, that is, not trombonists) started trumpeting him as a native son. Said the executive director, when announcing him, "He is an American, and this is the oldest American orchestra." Accurate, but utterly irrelevant. And he's not an *American*, for heaven's sake, he's Lorin Maazel.

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The very greatest rap against Kurt Masur is that he has not programmed enough contemporary music, that he is wedded to the standard works of the Central European repertory. It simply cannot be overstated how much critics—particularly those of the *New York Times*—value the showcasing of contemporary music. At times, this seems their only concern, their highest criterion. It is practically a daily obsession. In ways both bald and subtle, they mark down those who program the old—the musical equivalent of Matthew Arnold's "best that has been thought and said"—and praise those who will roll out the new. The surest way for a conductor to curry favor with critics is to go modern; the surest way to irk them is to throw at them a Schumann symphony, no matter how well performed it is.

One passage may serve to illustrate the mentality. It comes from Allan Kozinn, a *Times* critic and a very sharp one. In May, he reviewed a Philharmonic concert that offered Schoenberg, Beethoven, Debussy, and Ravel. Wrote Kozinn, "Schoenberg was represented by his 'Accompaniment to a Film Scene' (Op. 34), a piece that lasts a mere eight minutes, or less than half the duration of the intermission. True, the orchestra opened its program with it; but there was a clear sense of getting it out of the way and getting on with the good stuff." You see here that it's hard for the Philharmonic to win. A conductor is damned if he does, damned if he doesn't—and this is quite apart from the fact that Schoenberg's music is now squarely mainstream (and not terribly "contemporary," some of it being a hundred years old).

To make matters worse, the charge against Masur—that he eschews contemporary music—is not even true. He programs plenty of contemporary music, more, it would seem to me, than is required for politics' sake. The season before last, he conducted works by—count 'em, now—Kernis, Adès, Corigliano, Saariaho, Lutoslawski, Satoh, Henze, Kancheli, Marsalis, Rihm, and Liebermann. Last season, he led works by Sheng, Henze (again), Paulus, Gubaidulina, Danielpour, Kalhor, and Matthus. Next season, he will give premieres of music by Botti, Dun, and Turrin. These are not exactly—how to put it?—canonical names. Masur is clearly doing his "duty."

But his critics are never satisfied, because impossible to satisfy. When Masur does give them something contemporary, they are churlish—examples abound. One has to pity the conductor: He goes to the trouble of offering a large portion of contemporary dreck, and he gets no credit for it. He might as well stick to the masters if he's going to be tagged in any case as a Teutonic fuddy-duddy.

Ah, yes, fuddy-duddyism. A further slam against Masur is that he is not "hip" enough. Listen to *Times* critic Anthony Tommasini, writing in January: "The Philharmonic should consider younger, hipper, and preferably American candidates for music director." Remember that we are talking about the podium of the New York Philharmonic, not the manager's job of a trendy nightclub. With a mind to marketing possibilities, Tommasini wrote, "Imagine an enormous poster of [the long-haired Californian] Kent Nagano, outside Avery Fisher Hall," radiating the conductor's "youthful charisma, lithe physique and cool mane." Again, this is music we are talking about, and one of the world's most important symphonic posts. The critic then popped the name of Marin Alsop: "Her breaking of the gender barrier alone would totally transform the image of classical music in America." Thinking like this will sink the chances of a conductor such as Kurt Masur, who can only offer ability, wisdom, and excellence.

The maestro's final concert of the recently concluded season was the kind that drives his critics nuts: all Strauss, consisting of that composer's three great tone poems and the *Four Last Songs*. The performances were typical of Masur at his best: tasteful, intelligent, bracing. Although the music was familiar, the playing was fresh and inspiring. My main thought was: This tenure really should not end; it's foolish, even mean. And also: What a bunch of ingrates. First-rate performances of the standard repertory are not a dime a dozen; in fact, they are quite rare, and not to be taken for granted. Masur has perhaps spoiled New York.

They will be sorry, I predict. As so often happens in human affairs, Masur will probably be better appreciated after he has gone. An orchestra, like a city after a rescuing mayor, can go backward. At the moment, the Philharmonic is making up, falling all over itself in tribute to its hounded-out chief. They are billing the next, the final season as one of "Thank you, Kurt Masur." They invite the public to come "celebrate the Masur era"—an era they are cutting short, to no good. **NR**

Champion's Light

An Indian folktale tells
How a prince on his wedding night
Saw the aura of his bride
So dazzle the bridal suite
He needed no lamp or candles,
No moon or stars to see her.
So it was, said her mother, on
The day the girl was born:
Her face outshone the moon.

There is another splendor
That shines above the head
Of a warrior in the rage
And frenzy of a fight,
The glow Athena spread
Around Achilles' brow
As he battled to salvage
The body of his beloved.
They call this champion's light.

Now I lay me down, love,
The longest night of the year.
And I cannot sleep for fear
No deed or word is enough;
Nothing we do or write
In love or rage can put off
Darkness, in its cold study—
Not your luminous beauty,
Not even champion's light.

—Daniel Mark Epstein

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■ FILM ■

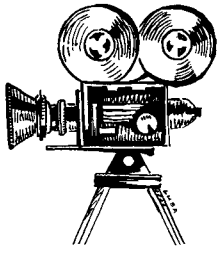
Pinocchio Was Here

JOHN SIMON

ASKED whom he considered the most important French poet, André Gide famously replied, "Victor Hugo, alas." Asked who the most important American film director is today, I answer, "Steven Spielberg, alas." He is a great technician, has a terrific eye, and knows how to reach a large audience.

But Spielberg's shortcomings are also considerable. The reason so many of his films deal with children or extraterrestrials—or with sensational topics such as killer sharks, dinosaurs, and the Holocaust—is that these are ways of avoiding adults with their everyday existential problems, at which Spielberg is no good. And then there is his sentimentality, about which more anon.

Spielberg's latest, ***A.I.*** (for Artificial Intelligence), is by any standards a lesser, by mine a much lesser, performance. It is a project Stanley Kubrick had been piddling with and talking to Spielberg about, based on a 1969 short story by Brian Aldiss. In Kubrick's hands, it was to have been a black dystopia; bequeathed to Spielberg, who wrote his own screenplay, it becomes an uneasy mix of trauma and treacle.



In a future where global warming has caused coastal cities (including New York) to be flooded, humanity has been decimated, and highly evolved humanoid robots serve numerous functions, from gardening to sexual pleasuring: everything except love, of which they are incapable. Now Prof. Hobby, the head of the Cybertronics lab, has come up with a robot boy, David, programmed to give undying love to his "parents." A Cybertronics employee, Henry Swinton, and his wife, Monica, whose mortally ill child has been cryogenically frozen and awaits a cure, are given David on a trial basis. After a number of contretemps, the wary Monica is won over and decides to make the adoption permanent. For some reason, David's love does not extend to Henry.

Everything is fine until the Swintons' natural son, Martin, is cured and returns home. Intense sibling rivalry ensues—Martin is odious, David angelic—and the Swintons, misled about some incidents, decide to jettison David. His grim "mother" drives him out into the woods and abandons the devastated kid in a scene guaranteed to melt the most robotic human heart. Here ends what is in essence the first movie. The second concerns David's wanderings with Teddy, his speaking and thinking super-toy teddy bear. They encounter a robot junkpile where less-damaged robots scavenge for replacement body parts, and where human robot hunters (threatened by robot proliferation) hunt down with robot dogs any stray mecha. (The robots are mechas, i.e., mechanicals; the humans, orgas, i.e., organics.) David meets up with Gigolo Joe, a cavorting, merry, adult mecha who services orga women better than an orga can. They strike up a friendship as David, yearning to become fully human and loved by Mommy, seeks the miracle-granting Blue Fairy he heard about in the fairy tales Monica read to him.

■

Bequeathed to Spielberg by Kubrick, *A.I.* becomes an uneasy mix of trauma and treacle.

■

By now you must realize that this is a retelling of Pinocchio, with the trusty Teddy as Jiminy Cricket, and so on. Joe and David wander into a Flesh Fair, a hideous circus where doomed robots go heroically to their grisly deaths, as ferocious orga crowds watch and even brutally participate: The Roman arena and Nazi death camps are evoked. I spare you sundry adventures—including an encounter with Dr. Know, a hologram that answers questions in Robin Williams's voice—and skip to where we arrive in a semi-submerged New York City. Gigolo Joe has been dragged off to annihilation, and the despairing David dives off Radio City Music Hall into freezing waters and a 2,000-year sleep.

By now, in film No. 3, humans are extinct and the world is inhabited by elongated, benevolent, large but wispy creatures that help David and Teddy find the Blue Fairy, who looks like a primitive Madonna in an Italian village church and speaks with the voice of Meryl Streep. David's wish is sort of granted: By means of a lock of Monica's

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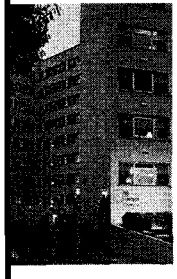

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hair that Teddy has secreted, she is brought back alive for one day on David's birthday. He is a real boy now with a birthday cake and an adoring Mommy for a day. He even gets to sleep in her bed. We are not shown the aftermath, but surely the second and final loss of Mommy must be even more—and eternally—wrenching.

Among all the echoes and overtones, the Pinocchio parallel is particularly damaging: The rapscallion puppet had more unruly, idiosyncratic vitality than soppy David ever will. The talking Teddy (voiced by Jack Angel) is very cute, and rather steals the show from David. Henry, played by the dull Sam Robards, might as well be a second-rate robot; Frances O'Connor, as the neurotic Monica, looks polished and manicured enough for a first-class robot, but is a very poor mother. As Joe, Jude Law, with a now blond, now black crest of a hairdo and what looks like polyurethane cheeks, has some amusing lines, but does not really fit into the story.

Perhaps the best scene comes early. It has Prof. Hobby (William Hurt) demonstrating to a group of scientific onlookers how a robot works (but don't they know that already?). He pushes the upper half of an attractive woman's face up like the visor on a helmet, revealing the inner mechanism, then pushes it down again, whereupon she calmly refreshes her makeup. But she, like Joe, seems metallic and hard—scarcely the kind of bed partner one would wish for.

Haley Joel Osment (David) is an accomplished actor, and with a little help from his excellent makeup, conveys the convergence of creature and machine with moving conviction. But he must stop playing weird, preternatural beings, lest he become typecast, if not indeed deprived of his boyhood.

The various designers, and the fine cinematographer Janusz Kaminski, conjure up hauntingly beautiful or houndingly scary images, but the clash of the Kubrick imp and the Spielberg sentimentalist undermines whatever cohesion the movie might have. Artificial intelligence veers into genuine silliness.

■ If there is one kind of film we do not need, it is that written, directed, and starred in by a pair of actors, with their friends for supporting cast. What could be more inbred—with all that term implies? Alan Cumming, the Scottish actor best known as the emcee in Broadway's *Cabaret*, and Jennifer Jason Leigh, who briefly played Sally opposite him, concocted this self-indulgent home movie, ***The Anniversary Party***, which purports to reveal intimate Hollywood revels—but delivers only the kind that by now any college kid could recite by heart.

Cumming plays a British novelist about to direct his first movie and cozying up to his star (the simpering Gwyneth Paltrow); Leigh is his jealous American wife, whose career, like their rocky marriage, may be on the skids. Their sixth-anniversary party assembles all kinds of dizzy film-biz types and their spouses, as well as some hated neighbors and a couple of unappealing dogs. There are fights, incipient infidelities, naked divings into the pool, a near death, and a flaunted abortion that may not actually have been one. Also some sage, sisterly exchanges between women friends. No cliché is left unturned in dialogue (mostly improvised) and action (mostly hand-me-down).

Kevin Kline and his real-life spouse (Phoebe Cates) and children, not to mention Parker Posey, Jennifer Beals, John C. Reilly, John Benjamin Hickey, among others, are entrapped in this mess. Cumming, supposedly a great ladies' man here, is one of the unsightliest and least masculine actors known to me, painful to watch; Leigh is much better, but you cannot believe them as a married couple. But then, there's not much else you can believe either. **NR**

■ BOOKS IN BRIEF ■

A Different Drummer: My Thirty Years with Ronald Reagan, by Michael K. Deaver (HarperCollins, 228 pp., $25)

MIKE DEAVER worked for Ronald Reagan for most of the period from the first gubernatorial campaign to the beginning of the second presidential term. As chief scheduler and logistics man, he probably spent more time alone with Reagan than anyone else but Mrs. Reagan. He had, as he tells us more than once, "a front-row seat." In this memoir he gives his account of events that have been recorded by many others (the various political campaigns; the Bitburg mess; and of course the assassination attempt), but he also gives some fine vignettes that are new, at least to this reader. There was the time a soldier in Vietnam wrote to ask if Gov. Reagan would phone the soldier's wife on their wedding anniversary; instead, Reagan went to their house with a dozen roses and spent an hour talking with the young woman. Or the time a local supporter in Illinois, serving as host for a speaking appearance, invited Deaver to go fishing. Reagan, who was normally untemptable when preparing for a speech, asked, "Do you think he'd mind if I came along, too?" The three men spent an uproarious afternoon fishing and swapping stories. Or the time, just after President Nixon's resignation, when the Deavers' three-year-old daughter began weeping in Gov. Reagan's arms. Deaver later asked what that was all about. "Beats me," said Reagan. "She just kept asking me, 'You'll never lie, will you?' I told her I wouldn't and that she shouldn't worry."

Since Deaver left the White House before 1986, he is spared having to work out the moral complexities of Iran–Contra. And we are spared watching him do so. When Deaver sticks to telling stories about his old boss, he is fine, and Reagan's admirers will be glad to have them. But when he feels compelled to give his own reflections, the results range from the banal ("In politics maybe even more so than in life as a whole, stand-up guys are way too rare"), to the bathetic ("The nation cried out, and a guy named Ron answered the call"), to the preposterously overwritten ("The office walls of official Washington are pasted with photographs of starstruck Washingtonians who sought to befriend the Great Clifford"). Be ready to hit the fast-forward.

—LINDA BRIDGES

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

The Laughter of Archie Bunker

NEW YORK, JUNE 26

THE series starring Archie Bunker was the most devastating ideological scam in the cultural history of television. Archie Bunker was the conservative. He was ignorant, semi-illiterate, racist, mean, cowardly, and a sycophantic bully. Viewers were invited to assume that these were properties of everyone who resisted any civil-rights initiative, who thought favorable notice might be made of anything done by President Nixon, or thought the Vietnam War defensible.

The program's success was owing to two factors: the conceptual genius of Norman Lear, and the theatrical genius of Carroll O'Connor.

If you grit your teeth and decide that all references to ethnic minorities will be done in street language, and that they will be fullthroatedly extravagant in expression, then what you will need to bring it all off is the leaven of humor.

Norman Lear and his writers get all the credit for that—in episode after episode, the exchanges were hilarious. They were all done in the disciplined framework of Archie, house bully; "Meathead," idealistic, argumentative son-in-law; "little girl," blonde daughter, loyal to her liberal husband; and "Dingbat," Archie's wife, moronic and endearing.

The obituaries on the program mostly take the line that the program did the service of calling to the mind of its viewers the egregious prejudices of urban working men. The pilot program showed Archie seated in the chair that would become famous because of his proprietary attachment to it, unlit cigar in his hand. He gives his calling card: "I'm white, I'm male, I'm Protestant. Where's there a law to protect me?"

Archie Bunker ran with that. Nonwhites were inferior, non-males accessories, non-Protestants suspicious, though so were such Protestants as attended with any fidelity to the practice of Christianity. Archie's was a once-a-year-in-church religion. Faith, hope, and charity—especially charity—were as instinctively suspect in Archie's world as Hebes and Coloreds. Archie was a saintly exhibit of the anti-Christian. By multiplying his deeds and attitudes, you could come up with something like 95 Antitheses of the Protestant faith.

But the triumph of the show would not have been thinkable without the contribution of Carroll O'Connor. His career, before coming to Queens for Norman Lear, was respectable, but not remarkable. And as much can be said about his subsequent career. It is a sad expression, and something of a sin to say about an accomplished actor, but if ever it could be said that someone was born to play a part, it had to be Carroll O'Connor, born to play Archie Bunker. He could look just plain stupid, if a name or an event came up that he could not identify but knew somehow that others could. His cowardice, when intimidated by a superior or by sheer confusion, would make his lips quiver in abjection. His meanness brought his eyes together, set his lips, and tightened his nostrils, though a slight vacuity in what could be seen of his eyes suggested a redemptive innocence. His bombast was not given a stadium to play off, but he had the whole of the little living room at his house in Astoria, Queens, and he filled that room.

Archie Bunker laughing there wasn't very much of. Laughter bounces mostly off hearty experiences in life, and Archie's life didn't have very many of those. But I had one very full exposure to O'Connor laughing.

On a summer day in 1976, my wife and I were invited to a dinner in honor of Henry Kissinger, a glossy affair in Pocantico Hills, by the freshly dispossessed vice president, Nelson Rockefeller. That was before the age of VCRs and I contemplated with horror absence from television at 8 P.M. on Saturday, but some invitations you can't turn down.

There were 40 or 50 tables of eight scattered about the lawn. I found myself seated next to—Carroll O'Connor! I told him that Providence had effected this meeting, because we now had a consolation prize for missing O'Connor on *All in the Family*.

"Welcome to the culture of victimization."

He quickly engaged us in conversation and told the story that was evidently very much on his mind. He had returned that very day from Rome. He had traveled there, he told us, with a lifelong friend who was maybe the oldest antifascist activist in America, having begun at age eight collecting coins in Los Angeles for the Committee to Aid the Allies in their war against Nazism and Fascism. His traveling companion loved jazz piano and, walking with O'Connor down an ancient Roman street near midnight, heard the tinkle of a piano, so they dropped into the boîte.

O'Connor's face warned us of drama to come. "My friend Abe, after a few pieces, asked the headwaiter, 'Who is that guy playing the piano?' And the maître d' said, 'That's Romano Mussolini.' Abe froze. 'Any relation to . . .?' 'Yes. He's Il Duce's son.' Abe sat there and we moved over, closer to the piano, and he began asking for favorite tunes. After about the fourth Scotch and soda, I swear it must have been two in the morning, he leaned over and said to the piano player, 'You know, that was a hell of a thing they did to your father!' "

The laughter was robust and wholesome. Carroll O'Connor had proved to us he could laugh better than Archie ever could.

Show Your I.D. Before Reading . . .

NEW YORK, JUNE 19

I TEND to lose my cell phone and so noticed a display ad for khaki pants with a compartment just below the right knee that is *perfect* for keeping electronic equipment, and that led me to Abercrombie & Fitch. I waited at the counter for my *cargo* (!) pants and looked down on the A&F summer catalogue featuring the usual handsome young man on the cover. But my attention was drawn to the subscription card alongside. "To subscribe: Fill out this card and head to the nearest A&F store

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with a valid photo ID." With a valid ID? I found that odd, and asked the young man behind the counter why IDs were required for subscribers to an Abercrombie & Fitch catalogue, and he said, "Well, uh, it's kind of porny inside."

I walked away with it, and now meditate on the reaches of the sexualization of our culture.

Presumably A&F's managers feel sure that the way to sell their current brand of clothing is to flaunt the modern dress. This presents a difficulty, inasmuch as clothiers live and die from the sale of clothes. But the current A&F catalogue goes far in suggesting that young men and women are better off wearing no clothes, which leaves the catalogue reader wondering what it is that A&F will make money from. Perhaps its catalogue, which of course is best advertised by the fiction that one really needs, in order to purchase it, an ID establishing that the purchaser is 18 years old.

The catalogue is introduced by a 150-word essay under the title, "The Pleasure Principle." A definition ensues: "in psychoanalysis, the tendency or drive to achieve pleasure and avoid pain as the chief motivating force in behavior." And then an amplification: "Summer being our favorite time of the year and all, we've worked extra hard to bring you our best issue yet by letting the pleasure principle be our guide through the hottest months."

The following page gives us a jaunty blonde clutching her hair, wet from the ocean she has just emerged from. If she is wearing anything, it would be below her pelvic joint. Above it, which is all the viewer can see, there are no clothes.

Next is a two-page spread in which six young men are shown, above the navel, and one woman. One spots a shoulder strap on the girl, which may be a bathing suit, though it is not descried by the camera. But lo, she does wear a watch band, sheltering the wrist's nudity. The men wear nothing. A few pages on, the boy wears tennis shoes (unlaced) and a towel over his head. At his waist is a camera. The shorts are given perspective by the young man's erection.

A few pages on, the young man is entirely naked, leaning slightly over one knee. Across the page are six narcissistic photos of his windblown face in differing exposures. On to another young man entirely naked, one knee (the windward knee) held up. He is reposing on the deck of a sailboat, his back resting on an unfurled main. The very next page gives us a girl wearing a T-shirt on which one can actually make out the name of our hosts. That shirt tapers off at the lady's waist. Below the waist there is nothing at all, except, of course, her naked body.

A few pages later the young man is naked again on the boat, but wearing a drenched jacket that reaches only as far as his waist. A few pages later we have five beautiful blondes in full summer wear, draped about a Byronic young man, evidently lost in the poetry of his reflections, a loose towel over his crotch.

And so on.

Speaking of nakedness, there was never a pitch more naked than Abercrombie's: the non-display of its products, in deference to sheer biological exhibitionism. The last part of the book actually depicts clothes of one kind or another, but the reader getting that far is hotly indignant: What are all those shirts and shorts and pants doing, interrupting my view of the naked kids! I mean, I showed you my ID, didn't I?

California Targeted

NEW YORK, JUNE 22

SOMEBODY, it is widely thought in California, should replace Gray Davis as governor. He is a Democrat, he is a little boring, and he is seen as the master of ceremonies of the energy crisis in that state. To be short of electricity in the capital state of visual entertainment is a paradox that should not be allowed to happen. As a wag dolefully put it, if this goes on they're going to have to watch television by candlelight.

An aspirant executioner is William Simon Jr., son, as one would expect, of William Simon Sr. He was a great 20th century figure, individualist, philanthropist, secretary of energy, then of Treasury, a man of adamant views and expressiveness. Bill Jr. gathered the forces, and in New York City, at the Waldorf Astoria, raised $2 million. "People make reference to my own resources," he told a fellow diner, "and I don't deny them, but as I told the reporter in California, if I don't raise $40 million, I will pull out of the race."

The GOP has not recovered from the Proposition (187) that proposed dealing with illegal immigrants as though they were actually illegal. That was interpreted by the Hispanic community as a slight on any man's right to be illegal in America; and although GOP governor Pete Wilson endorsed the proposition, and it was carried by a substantial majority, Republicans have suffered enormously from its shadow. The excellent Dan Lungren lost California mightily to Gray Davis in 1998, and the comeback now attempted will be costly.

Bill Simon's competition isn't only the incumbent governor. It is the possible candidacy of GOP mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles. Riordan, like Simon, could finance his own campaign, but he has a rich-man's ambivalence to the whole idea of all of that exertion. He is 71 years old and there is that other ambivalence, which is that of conservative California voters to Riordan. He is not a faithful feller.

Twice he declared for Democratic Dianne Feinstein for senator, and he played a prominent role in the Tom Bradley campaign for governor of California. Add to this that on three issues of substance among California conservatives—abortions, guns, and gays—he is, to say the least, wobbly.

Bill Simon is an engaging human being. His face is exactly that of his father, the same smile, though not the same charisma. His speech was well programmed, abiding by the usual protocols in New York City. The invocation was done by a rabbi and a priest who embraced each other so heartily as to leave the audience wondering whether before they were done, they exchanged one another's religion.

Bill Simon believes in what one would want a GOP candidate to believe. He did not say much about President Bush, perhaps because it was widely reported that Mr. Bush had telephoned Riordan on his birthday in May, allegedly endorsing a Riordan for Governor campaign.

But Mr. Simon did say that California's most pressing problem, more pressing even than the power shortage, was the looming water shortage.

Some sport was made over the charge that Simon is a carpetbagger in California. Simon went west eleven years ago and stayed on, and sings the praises of his state at least as persuasively as newborn New Yorkers like Kennedy, Buckley, and Clinton, who have served in the Senate.

Will Simon's campaign prosper? It is hard to judge, in part because of the Riordan cloud. The L.A. mayor says he is thinking about it. But, he says a little sleepily, he will say something on the general point by next September.

Meanwhile, the focus will increase on Bill Simon, whose legacy and personal charm will work well for him.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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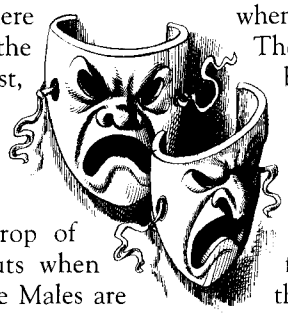
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

BACK in February I wrote a column about the "Duhs," those human postholes in the barren landscape of Customer Service who mangle mail orders and can't spell King. Now I bring you even worse tidings. This column is about the Ignos.

An Igno is a Duh with a college education. There's nothing wrong with their gray matter, it's just that it remains virgin soil. They sow it not, and neither do they reap it. It just lies there undisturbed, as fallow as the day it was born, until at last, like other overdue virginities, it loses all capacity for response and you can't do a thing with it.



Ignos are the chief crop of Diversity Ed, what sprouts when Western Civ's Dead White Males are eliminated from college curricula and replaced with African oral historians, Aztec vivisectionists, and the diaries of Anaïs Nin.

Columnists have made hay with dumbed-down curricula. I've written my share of polemics, but I made the mistake of confining myself to arguments against multiculturalism per se. The narrower but more intriguing subject of Igno psychology is one that I left unexplored until two recent incidents convinced me that we are witnessing the spread of a new kind of stupidity that developed nations have never before had to deal with.

The first incident came about when I had to correct a public record involving my Social Security number. I dealt with an administrative assistant, a cordial, seemingly competent woman in her early thirties. She assured me that my problem was all straightened out, but given my natural pessimism, I automatically said, "I can see the handwriting on the wall." That's when she looked at the wall. Turned around and gave it the old up-and-down once-over. Looked back at me with eyes as big as saucers. "It's just a figure of speech," I mumbled.

The second incident involved a group of Gen-Xers who moved into, and then out of, my apartment complex. I never talked to them and I'm not even sure how many there were, but I do know one thing about them—the whole place knew it: They had a red light over their door. Each apartment has a faux Gay Nineties gas lantern for use as an entry light and they put a red bulb in theirs. It was not why they moved out; that had to do with unforeseen financial problems when one of the group lost her job. They weren't really operating a brothel, so all was innocent.

Was it ever. After they left, a neighbor told me that they didn't know what a red light over a door meant. "I told them and they were dumbfounded," she said. "I don't think they believed me."

At first I found it incredible that these heirs of the sexual revolution did not know what a red light symbolized, but then it hit me: I had run into the first principle of the New Stupidity—the inter-generational idiom was dead.

When you grow up, as I did, hearing about "houses of ill repute" and "ladies of the evening" from older members of an extended family, you not only find out what a red light means, but you sign up for an ongoing course in the brand of informal history known as "lore," or, what "everybody knows."

Like the extended family that watered it, America's lore pool has dried up. What "everybody knows" has gone the way of every other certainty because we can't even agree on who "everybody" is. Our obsessive commitments to diversity and radical individualism have encouraged Ignos to practice a self-segregation of the intellect governed by the credo "Everybody's gotta right to his own everybody." The mind of the Igno resembles the tables in their college cafeterias where races and ethnicities voluntarily huddle with their own kind. The typical Igno can seem intelligent and informed as long as he doesn't budge from his educational salt lick, but let him stray and there's no telling what will go over his head.

What happened with the red light promises to engulf the phrase "bully pulpit," which comes from the same era. Ignos have only a foggy idea, if that, of who Teddy Roosevelt was, so they can hardly be expected to know that in TR's day "bully" was an expression of enthusiasm comparable to "cool." It won't be long now before the Ignos get it all mixed up with day-care aggression and conclude that bullying is a presidential perk.

The woman who searched the wall for the handwriting I saw thereon personifies the Igno condition from the religious conservative's point of view: People who don't read the Bible will believe anything.

I'll concede that Diversity Ed imperils the Igno's soul, but I'm more interested in what else it does to him, and by extension, to all of us.

When people stop reading the Bible and Shakespeare they cut themselves off from an enormous number of figures of speech used in the English language. Growing up without these models, they never develop the habit of using simile and metaphor themselves. Eventually they develop a fear and loathing of all such literary conventions and a conviction that anyone who uses them is being somehow "insincere." No wonder ringing political oratory is dead. No candidate would dare.

The uneducated have always been prone to paranoia because so much that they don't understand is always swirling around them. One "whom" and they think they are being snubbed; a speaker who alternates "if it was" and "if it were" is tricky; and people who use "big words" are making fun of them. Uneducated people with college degrees are even more touchy, and their numbers are steadily increasing.

The American way of solving problems like these is to turn everybody into an Igno so that nobody will know the difference. Moviemakers are doing their part by promoting Igno literal-mindedness, replacing subtlety, indirection, and symbolism with writhing nude bodies and oceans of blood.

It was bound to happen. When there are no imaginations left, nothing is left to the imagination. **NR**

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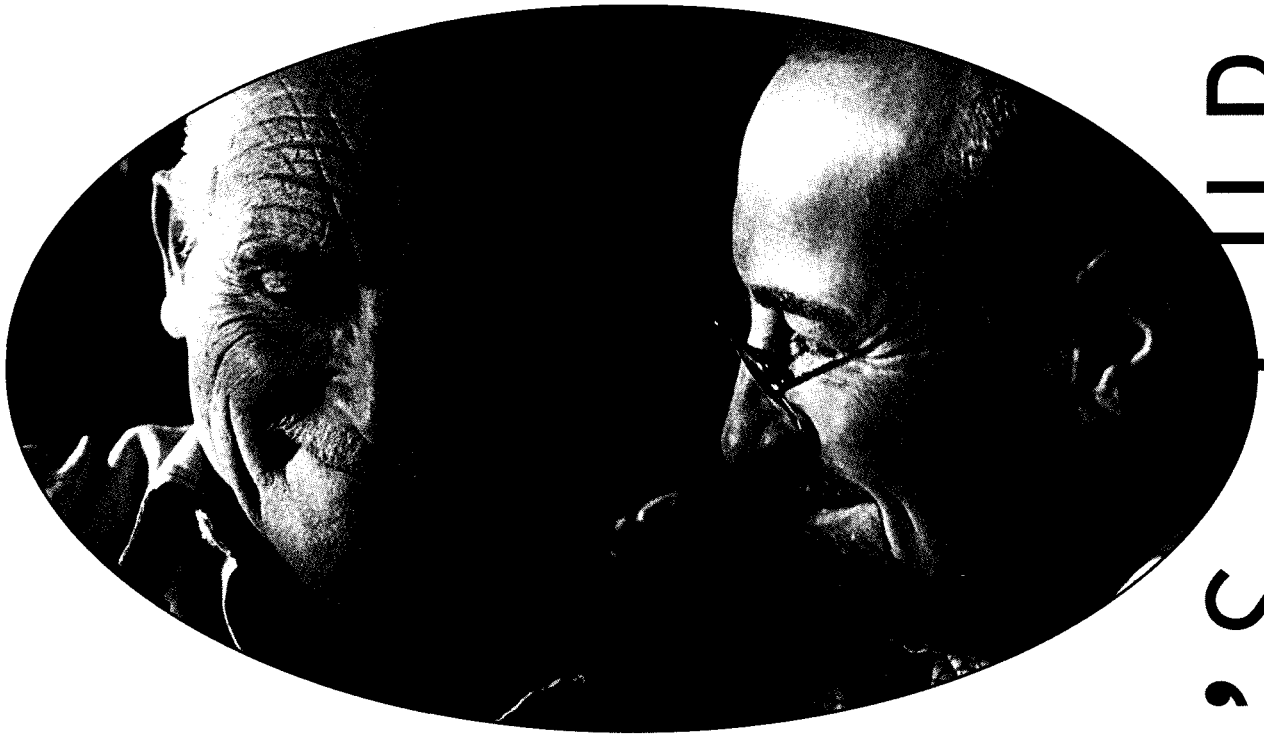

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